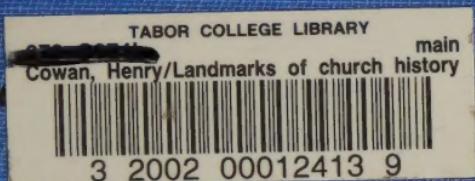


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Church History  
To the Reformation

By the Rev.

Henry Cowan, D.D.

Professor of Church History in the University of Aberdeen



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## GENERAL EDITORIAL NOTE

ON behalf of the Christian Life and Work Committee of the Church of Scotland, the Editors of the Guild Library desire to acknowledge the generous appreciation with which the Series, in its original cheap form, has been received. It has been welcomed by members and representatives of many Churches in Great Britain and in the British Colonies and in the United States of America. Various friendly readers, as well as the enterprising publishers in New York (Messrs. Randolph and Co.), have suggested the publication of an enlarged edition ; and it is hoped the present issue, in response to the desire thus expressed, will be the means of introducing the books to a still wider circle of readers in both hemispheres. It will be understood that while the Editors are in full sympathy with the aims of the Authors, they do not hold themselves bound to all their opinions.

**A. H. CHARTERIS.**

**J. A. M'CLYMONT.**



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE issue of a third edition of these *Landmarks*, in an enlarged form, gives to the author the opportunity of appending an index, and of making additions and emendations. The title of the book will suggest, what its perusal will show, that while the progress of the Church has been continuously traced, no attempt has been made to furnish a complete synopsis of Church History. Such a compendium, within the limited space at the writer's disposal, could have been only a skeleton. Outstanding events and personages have been selected in chronological order, and around these the author has endeavoured to group what appeared to him relevant and memorable. The main purpose of the book will be fulfilled if its less informed readers are induced to take a deeper interest in a most instructive subject, and to study, in fulness of detail, some of those periods or departments of Church History to which a brief introduction is here supplied. The *Landmarks* close with the Reformation, in view of other projected volumes (in the same series) dealing with the history of Modern Christendom. A brief Appendix, however, of leading events subsequent to the Reformation has, in this edition, been provided.

*N.B.*—Part of the substance of Chapters II. and III. appeared in the *Bible Reader's Manual*, edited by Dr. C. H. H. Wright. The publishers (Messrs. Collins, Sons, and Co.) kindly permit the partial reproduction.



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## CHAPTER I

### LANDMARKS OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE

THE Church of Christ denotes either the **Visible** or the **Invisible Church**. The former (1 Cor. xii. 28) embraces the entire body of professed Christians in the world (with their children) whose creed and conduct are not in flagrant contradiction to their profession. The latter (Heb. xii. 23) consists of the whole number of real believers in the Lord Jesus Christ both on earth and in heaven. By Church History is meant a record of the Church Visible. Were it possible, indeed, to relate, on any comprehensive scale, the history of the great brotherhood of genuine believers, a deeply significant and instructive story would be unfolded. It would be seen how many, of whom no record remains, have been influential agents in the advancement of Christ's kingdom, and how not a few prominent figures in the historical panorama retreat into the background of comparative insignificance. It would be found that many incidents and circumstances, unknown to the historian or seemingly too trivial for notice, have been potent factors in the accomplishment of the divine saving purpose ; while events which fill a large place in history—imperial edicts, general councils, ecclesiastical movements,

even missionary enterprises—have in some cases exercised only a slight influence in the edification of the Church Invisible. Here and there, particularly in Christian biography, glimpses are caught of this inner history of the true Church ; but the record, as a whole, is revealed to the divine eye alone. To the ecclesiastical historian belongs, at least for the most part, the lower, yet important, task of tracing the origin and growth, witness and work, declensions and reformations, external conflicts and internal controversies of the Church Visible.

**1. Birth and baptism of the Church.**—The Pentecost after our Lord's resurrection is usually called the Church's birthday ; it was rather the day of its baptism. The Christian Church came into existence four years earlier, when on the banks of Jordan Jesus gathered round Him His original group of followers (John i.). Throughout His ministry the company of disciples, notwithstanding occasional sifting (John vi. 66), gradually increased. During that period the Church's first office-bearers were appointed—the Twelve ; its earliest missions were organised (Matt. x., Luke x.) ; its primitive liturgy, the Lord's Prayer, was prescribed (the only liturgical prayer certainly used by apostles) ; the two sacraments were instituted ; and the germs of the Church's creed were set forth (Matt. xvi. 16, 17 ; xxviii. 19). After our Lord's resurrection, a special gathering of Church members, probably in Galilee, reached the number of 500 (1 Cor. xv. 6) ; and the roll of believing brethren in Jerusalem contained 120 names (Acts i. 15). It was a little company to evangelise the world, but on the day of Pentecost those primitive believers, particularly the apostles, received power ; they were “all filled with the Holy Ghost.” Significant external wonders accompanied this dispensation of the Spirit : a rushing wind, symbolical of spiritual activity and mysterious operation ; tongues

of flame, emblematic of enlightening, enkindling, and purifying influence; ecstatic utterances of praise in varied speech, prophetic of the world-wide extension of the Faith. But grander far than such outward marvels were the inward Pentecostal transformations: men "out of weakness made strong"; timid followers changed into bold leaders, "ignorant and unlearned men" becoming potent prophets, able both to expound divine truth and to convince human hearts. It was a baptism of the Spirit, and the Church speedily "grew and multiplied." "The same day," after the first apostolic sermon by St. Peter, "there were added about 3000 souls"; a little later, after the first apostolic miracle, the number was 5000. Church membership involved, as yet, no outward secession from Jewish religious fellowship and worship. The followers of Jesus were distinguished by Christian baptism; by belief in His resurrection and divine Sonship; by household gatherings for common prayer and sacramental bread-breaking; by an abounding charity which manifested itself in voluntary community of goods, in so far as there was need; and by a conspicuous purity of life which rendered a deliberate offence against truth among the brotherhood the occasion of a memorable judgment (Acts ii.-v.).

**2. The first persecution and the first martyr.**—At an early stage of the Church's history the rapid spread of Christian faith aroused the opposition of the Jewish priesthood and eldership; and those who had rejected and crucified the Master apprehended and imprisoned His leading disciples. A supernatural liberation from prison, and the prudent counsel of Gamaliel, an influential Pharisee, led to the dismissal of the apostles after being scourged and threatened; but, subsequently, the preaching of Stephen, a Grecian Jew, who proclaimed, along with the Gospel, the approaching end of the Jewish

dispensation, occasioned the revival of the policy of violent repression. The stoning of St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, inaugurated an extensive and bitter persecution, which was brought to a close only by the sudden and supernatural conversion of its chief organiser, Saul of Tarsus (about 37 A.D.).

**3. The first Gentile Christian community.**—The earliest believers were all Jews, or circumcised proselytes to Judaism ; and the original idea of a Christian Church prevalent among them (notwithstanding our Lord's intimation in John x. 16) was that of a society of Hebrews and proselytes who acknowledged Jesus as Messiah. About 36 A.D. the Samaritans were evangelised, and were freely admitted to Church fellowship, owing, doubtless, to our Lord's own ministry among them, as well as to their observance of circumcision and their partly Jewish descent. Against uncircumcised Gentiles the door was at first strictly closed ; and Peter required a special vision and a manifestation of the Holy Spirit to induce him to admit, by baptism, the uncircumcised proselyte Cornelius into Church fellowship. About the same period, however, Jews from Cyprus and Cyrene took the signal step which issued in the development of the Christian community out of a Jewish sect into a catholic Church. They evangelised the citizens of Antioch without reserve or religious distinction, and founded a Gentile Church on which Barnabas, the trusted delegate of the mother-Church of Jerusalem, set his seal of approbation. This catholic development of the new brotherhood was simultaneous with the popular bestowal and eventual acceptance of what was then a new name : "The disciples were called *Christians* first in Antioch."

**4. The earliest Church controversy and ecclesiastical Council.**—The recognition by Barnabas of the uncircumcised Gentile Church at Antioch was not universally

endorsed. A section of the brotherhood at Jerusalem (not including any of the apostles) contended that circumcision and observance of the Mosaic Law were necessary, if not as a preliminary to baptism, at least as a part of Christian discipline with a view to salvation. By this time numerous Gentile communities had been founded in Asia by Barnabas and Paul, and the retrograde movement was firmly withstood. For the settlement of the question the first Church Council was convened at Jerusalem. After full discussion, the principle of Gentile Christian freedom from Judaism was sanctioned, with explanations and restrictions designed to prevent offences against purity from being regarded by Gentiles as mere ceremonial trespasses, and to promote harmonious social intercourse in mixed communities of Hebrew and Gentile believers. The conflict, however, for Gentile liberty, thus apparently settled, had in reality only begun. During the subsequent ministry of St. Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, the struggle continued, partly (1) against the inconsistent attitude of sincere upholders of the Jerusalem decrees, who recognised the Christian status of uncircumcised believers, but were disposed to treat them as an inferior spiritual caste;<sup>1</sup> and chiefly (2) against those who, in spite of the Council and of apostolic teaching, continued to preach, in Galatia and elsewhere, the necessity of circumcision (Gal. iii.). The multiplication of Gentile Christian communities gradually weakened the influence of this Judaising party in the Church.

**5. The first Imperial persecution.**—Hitherto the molestation of Christians, with a few incidental exceptions (e.g. Acts xvi. 22), was inflicted or instigated by Jews, and discouraged, on the whole, by the

<sup>1</sup> This inconsistency was countenanced, on one occasion, even by St. Peter and St. Barnabas (Gal. ii. 11-18).

Roman Government. The first notable persecution by pagan authority was that of Nero, in 65-68 A.D. Nero had incurred the suspicion, justly or unjustly of originating or extending a great conflagration at Rome, in order to obtain the glory of rebuilding the city with increased magnificence. To divert opprobrium from himself, he caused the charge of arson to be made against the Christians, whose professed expectation of the destruction of the world by fire (2 Pet.) would lend some colour to the calumny. The widespread popular prejudice against the new sect, as unsocial in habits, inimical to mankind, and even guilty of secret abominations, compensated for the lack of cogent evidence. The gardens of Nero, now occupied by the Vatican Palace, were the scene of inhuman cruelties perpetrated on the Christian victims. Both the extent and the worse than brutal character of this Neronian persecution are attested by Tacitus, the Roman historian. Through extorted confession and malicious information a "vast multitude" were convicted. Some were crucified; others were sewn up in the skins of wild beasts, and torn by dogs; others still were smeared over with pitch and used as torches to illuminate the darkness at the celebration of public games. The treatment of Christians at Rome naturally affected the attitude of provincial governors towards the Church; and to anti-Christian sentiment, thus imperially sanctioned, and fostered by influential Jews, is to be ascribed the arrest of St. Paul in Asia, issuing in his second and severer imprisonment in the Mamertine dungeon at Rome, and his execution about 66-68 A.D. Peter's martyrdom in Rome at the same time has been widely accepted as historical, although on less trustworthy evidence. His death there, however, either then or at a later period,<sup>1</sup> may be regarded as almost a certainty.

<sup>1</sup> Professor Ramsay in his *Church in the Roman Empire* (chap.

His tomb, on the site of St. Peter's Church, was pointed out at the close of the second century ; and this ancient tradition of his burial at Rome is confirmed by the absence of any claim by any other place to the coveted possession of his venerated bones. The story of his crucifixion head downwards is not related till early in the third century, and appears to be legendary.

The persecution of Nero doubtless contributed to harmony between Jewish and Gentile Christians ; amid common peril and suffering, mutual sympathy would increase. More signally, the consolidation of the two sections of Christendom was promoted by the Jewish War which issued in the destruction of Jerusalem (70 A.D.). On the one hand, owing to the refusal of Christian Jews to take part in this insurrection against Rome, the breach with their non-Christian fellow-countrymen became wider ; Jewish believers were henceforth formally excommunicated from the synagogues, and were thus thrown back more fully for religious sympathy on their Gentile fellow-Christians. On the other hand, through the overthrow of the Temple, the fabric of Judaism was shattered, the national celebrations became impracticable, and one main bond between the Christian Jew and Judaism was broken.

xiii.) gives reasons of considerable weight for the contention that St. Peter lived in Rome till about 80 A.D., and that he wrote his First epistle about that time.

## CHAPTER II

### DEATH OF THE APOSTLE JOHN (ABOUT 100 A.D.) AND CLOSE OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE

As St. John survived until the reign of Trajan, who became emperor in the year 98, his death may be dated approximately 100 A.D. It constitutes a notable landmark. Hitherto the Church has been under the tutelage of its apostolic founders, the authoritative interpreters of Christ's mind and will. Henceforth it must become, so far, self-reliant, enjoying, however, the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, and possessing written remains as well as traditions of those whose inspired voices have now all been hushed. The apostolic age has closed ; the sub-apostolic has begun.

1. **Extension of Church.**—By this time Christian communities had been established in most towns of the Roman Empire from the Euphrates to the Tiber. In 112 Pliny, Governor of Bithynia, reported that, "even through the rural districts" of his province, "the Christian contagion had spread." A leading presbyter of Rome (Clement) writes, about 96 A.D., that St. Paul "reached the furthest bounds of the West," and thus gives countenance to the early belief that this apostle accomplished his "journey into Spain." Traditions, regarded as trustworthy by the historian

Eusebius, indicate the extension of the faith by apostles beyond the Empire—in Scythia by St. Andrew, in Persia by St. Thomas, in “India” (perhaps Arabia) by St. Bartholomew. St. John spent the last thirty years of his life at Ephesus as headquarters (except during exile at Patmos), and established new congregations throughout Asia Minor. An early writer<sup>1</sup> describes the apostle’s anxious pursuit of a promising convert who had lapsed into brigandage, his surrender to followers of the robber and request to be taken to their captain, the touching interview of the aged saint with the young apostate, and the prodigal’s repentance and restoration, “baptized afresh with his own tears.”

**2. Relation of Church to Empire.**—Under Nero Christians were persecuted less for their religion than for alleged crime. Some time before the apostolic age closed, Christianity itself became distinctly criminal in the eyes of the Government. This development had been hastened partly by the clearer recognition of Christianity as an independent religion, no mere phase of Judaism, and not entitled, therefore, to the toleration which the latter enjoyed as a national faith ; but chiefly by the disposition and policy of the Emperor Domitian (81-96 A.D.). His proverbial cruelty predisposed him to persecution, while his suspicious temper led him to mistake our Lord’s spiritual kingdom and millennial reign for a rival earthly empire. Only a sight of the horny hands of two kinsmen of Jesus, summoned from Palestine, convinced him that they were peaceful farmers, not restless revolutionists. His blasphemous vanity, moreover, which claimed the title of Lord and God, brought into prominence the Christian refusal to render divine honour to emperors. Under Domitian, accordingly, the profession of Christianity became treason ;

<sup>1</sup> Clement of Alexandria, about 190 A.D.

and while few details have come down, testimony is borne to repeated persecution and numerous martyrdoms. Among eminent victims was Domitian's cousin, Flavius Clemens; to this reign, also, the exile of St. John is assigned.<sup>1</sup> Thenceforth Christianity continued to be proscribed; the actual prosecution, however, of Christians depended largely on local feeling, and on the personal attitude of particular emperors, provincial governors, or civic magistrates. Under the mild rule of Nerva (96-98), and during the earlier part of Trajan's reign (98-117), persecution was practically discontinued. St. John, recalled from exile, passed the evening of his life at Ephesus in peace.

**3. Fusion of Jewish and Gentile Christendom.**—During the later apostolate of St. John this fusion advanced. The character of the Apostle of Love qualified him to be pre-eminently the exponent of Christian catholicity and the promoter of ecclesiastical unity. In his extreme old age, when he could no longer go about or deliver a lengthened discourse, he let himself be carried to the Christian meeting-place, and reiterated there the words which alone he had strength to utter: "Little children, love one another." Ephesus, as not only a commercial, political, and religious centre of the Gentile world, but also a leading resort of Jews, was specially adapted for the exercise of unifying influence. Among secondary objects of the Book of Revelation and the Fourth Gospel, which both belong to this period of St. John's life, we may discern, in the former, the purpose of weaning Jewish Christians from over-attachment to their ruined holy city and temple by the bright

<sup>1</sup> By Irenæus, 180 A.D. Some modern critics, however, date the apostle's exile in Nero's reign (see Dr. M'Clymont's text-book on *The New Testament and its Writers*, chap. xxiv. § 3). The story of St. John being thrown into a caldron of burning oil and emerging unscathed, is not mentioned until the beginning of the third century.

picture of a new, more glorious, and imperishable Jerusalem, with no temple to separate Jew from Gentile ; while in the Gospel is manifest the equally significant aim of emphasising the universality of Christ's mission and the comprehensiveness of His Church (i. 9, 29 ; iii. 16 ; iv. 21, 40 ; vi. 51 ; viii. 12 ; x. 16 ; xi. 52 ; xii. 32). By the close of the apostolic age the unity of the Church had been substantially accomplished, and the consolidation became signal after St. John's death, when, in 137, a Gentile bishop presided over a mixed Christian community in the restored Jerusalem. Hebrew Christians, who would not be amalgamated and assimilated—residing chiefly in Palestine—formed themselves into two sects outside the Apostolic Church : (1) Nazarenes, whose doctrine was otherwise orthodox, but who clung to the Mosaic Law as still binding on Jews ; (2) Ebionites, who insisted on all Christians being circumcised, denounced St. Paul as a false apostle, and denied the divinity and supernatural birth of Christ.

**4. Conflict with heresy.**—St. John enforced ecclesiastical exclusion as well as promoted ecclesiastical comprehension. As Apostle of Love, he sought to weld Jewish and Gentile Christendom into one ; as Apostle of Truth, he excluded from Christian communion the propagators of a deadly heresy, which amalgamated Christian fact and doctrine with the philosophic dogma of the inherent evil of matter. The most influential teacher of this adulterated Christianity was Cerinthus, a Jew of Alexandria, who maintained (among other errors) that the Divine Christ could have had no material body, otherwise He would have been sinful like ourselves. It was to redeem soul from body (so this teacher declared) that Christ appeared ; He never became really incarnate, but merely used the man Jesus as an inspired organ to teach mankind and exemplify a holy life ; He descended on

Jesus at the latter's baptism, and withdrew from Him before His death. There is a story of the Apostle meeting Cerinthus at a public bath in Ephesus, and rushing forthwith out, in fear lest the roof should fall on the arch-enemy of truth. The legend embodies grotesquely St. John's holy intolerance of doctrine which contradicted the fundamental verity of the faith—that God became man. Against this Cerinthian heresy the Apostle wrote such passages as i. 14; vi. 51-56 (Gospel), and 1 Ep. i. 1; iv. 2, 3; 2 Ep. 7. With St. John the Incarnation is the core of theology, as love is the heart of morality.

5. **Ministry of the Church.**—In the earlier part of the apostolic age, when supernatural gifts abounded and Church work was mainly missionary, prophets and evangelists stood, next to the apostles, in the front rank of Christian ministry. By the close of the century, in regions where congregations of longer standing existed, the leading *local* office-bearers had begun to occupy a position of equal, if not greater, influence. In the New Testament only two orders of ministry have local responsibility: (1) presbyters (elders) or bishops, whose original and essential function was government—supervision of worship, exercise of discipline, administration of charity—but who, by the time when the First Epistle to Timothy was written, were expected also to teach, although not all were yet so engaged (1 Tim. iii. 2; v. 17); (2) deacons and deaconesses,<sup>1</sup> who, without sharing in Church government, assisted the presbyters in various functions. Over these local office-bearers the apostles, personally or through commissioners like Timothy or Titus, had exercised general

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xvi. 1, R. V. marg. Phoebe was almost certainly an official deaconess. The female diaconate was the natural outcome of adult baptism and the limited social intercourse between the sexes. The office is indisputably mentioned by Pliny in 112 A.D.

supervision without interference with local details. There is no evidence that before 100 A.D. presbyters and bishops were different functionaries,<sup>1</sup> but the presbyter who usually presided at meetings came naturally to occupy a position similar to that of the moderator of a presbytery. Early in the second century, this presiding elder had begun, in Syria and Asia Minor, to be recognised as a distinct and superior office-bearer, to whom alone the name of bishop was applied. Whether this development took place in St. John's lifetime is disputed; even if it did, the Apostle must have regarded the episcopate in this new sense not as indispensable, but only as lawful and locally expedient. For Polycarp, a disciple of St. John, writing in the second century to the Philippians about the mutual duties of office-bearers and people, refers only to presbyters and deacons, indicating that there was then no bishop (in the later sense) even in the important church of Philippi, and that one who knew the Apostle's mind saw no need for the office there.

6. Church worship, based on the Synagogue Service, included prayer, praise, reading of (O.T.) Scripture, and sermon. The Lord's Supper was celebrated every Lord's Day, and at the time of St. John's death was still held in the evening along with a Love Feast (Agapé). Apart from the Lord's Prayer, there is no evidence of set forms of worship earlier than the Epistle of Clement (96 A.D.), which contains a prayer apparently liturgical. The recently-recovered "Teaching of the XII. Apostles," usually ascribed to the beginning of the second century, includes three thanksgivings for use at Holy Communion. St. John was possibly aware of such liturgical worship, but neither he nor any other apostle is known to have used or prescribed any form of devotion. Details of

<sup>1</sup> The original identity of presbyter and bishop is proved from *Acts* xx. 17, 28; *Tit.* i. 5, 7; *1 Pet.* v. 1, 2 (Gr.).

Church service, as of Church government, the apostles apparently left to local determination. The annual commemoration of our Lord's Passion and Resurrection was in 100 A.D. already a usage, adopted, though not enjoined, by St. John. He observed the anniversaries, however, not always on a Friday and a Sunday, but stately on the 14th and 16th of the Jewish month Nisan—the days of the year on which Christ died and rose from the dead. Here, again, was no prescribed duty, but simply an edifying practice. In things non-essential the apostles left Christendom free.

7. Church life at the close of the apostolic age is reflected in the Epistles to the Seven Churches of Asia (Rev. ii. iii.). Light is mingled with shade. On the one hand, we behold "labour without fainting," and spiritual riches associated with material poverty; brotherly charity and ministry amid pagan covetousness and self-seeking; faithfulness to truth amid deadly error, and stedfastness till death amid sharp persecution. On the other hand, we contemplate Ephesian declension and Laodicean lukewarmness; offensive self-sufficiency and spiritual pride; a corrupt leaven and unworthy toleration of it; the presence in the Church of those who have "a name to live but are dead." Yet the Church as a whole is a community of those who have "passed from death unto life," and who can be appropriately described as the "children of God" (1 John iii. 2, 14).

## CHAPTER III

### ~~MARTYRDOM OF POLYCARP, AND CLOSE OF THE~~ SUB-APOSTOLIC AGE (155 A.D.)

POLYCARP, Bishop of Smyrna, was the last surviving eminent disciple of St. John, and may have been a presbyter of the Church there when it received through the Apostle the message, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." In Polycarp, at any rate, after a ministry of over half a century, the words were notably fulfilled. He suffered martyrdom under Antoninus Pius. This emperor, like his predecessors Trajan and Hadrian, was distinguished for justice and clemency; but the principle, already established, that Christianity was an illicit religion, none of the three ventured to reverse. The application of this principle, however, they mitigated and minimised. Magisterial search for Christians was prohibited, and no persecution was officially initiated. Riotous clamour against Christian communities was interdicted, and charges against individuals had to be formally made by responsible prosecutors. During this period, accordingly (100-155 A.D.), persecution, as a rule, was limited to cases in which personal animosity, motives of self-interest, or popular fanaticism issued in local prosecu-

tions. The fact that Polycarp, a prominent bishop, remained so long unmolested, proves that the Empire, at this stage, had no desire to oppress the Church. The probable occasion of the persecution during which Polycarp's martyrdom took place, was a great earthquake at Smyrna two or three years before. Such disasters were popularly ascribed to the wrath of the gods, and so excited hostility against Christian "impiety." The anti-Christian spirit thus aroused would be further inflamed by the numerous Jews of the city, by pagan priests whose temples Polycarp's ministry had deprived of worshippers or offerings, and by all whose trade, like that of the Ephesian silversmiths (Acts xix.), was affected by the progress of the faith. An ancient record describes Polycarp's arrest and condemnation ; his reluctant withdrawal from the city, on the outbreak of persecution, at the earnest entreaty of his flock ; his calm surrender when the rural hiding-place was betrayed ; the scene at the trial when a mysterious voice, probably of some friend in the crowd, but to many appearing to come from heaven, cried, "Be strong, Polycarp, and play the man" ; the Governor's merciful appeal to the venerable confessor to have pity on his own old age ; the invitation to swear by Cæsar's genius and to reproach Christ, when he would at once be set free ; and the memorable answer, "Eighty-six years have I served Christ, and He never wronged me : how can I now speak evil of my King and Saviour ?" An arranged series of bloody "spectacles" in the amphitheatre had already been concluded, but a demand was made for Polycarp's death by fire, and he was bound to the stake. To ardent Christian bystanders the flames appeared to form a halo round the martyr's head ; and when some compassionate official hastened death by plunging a spear into his body, the belief arose, and became enshrined

in legend, that the fire refused to touch his saintly person.

As the death of St. John marks the end of the apostolic, so the martyrdom of Polycarp signalises the close of the sub-apostolic age—the period during which the Church was guided mainly by associates of apostles, to whom some reflected authority pertained.

1. **The diffusion of Christianity** throughout the Roman Empire had by this time been virtually completed. A few years before Polycarp's death, a writer whose experience as a traveller adds weight to his testimony (Justin Martyr) declared, with rhetorical exaggeration, but presumably not without solid basis of fact, that there was "no single race of men among whom prayers are not offered up in the name of the Crucified Jesus." Two important provinces in particular, Southern Gaul and North Africa, must during this period, if not earlier, have been evangelised; for, about twenty years after Polycarp's death, they contained large Christian communities bringing forth ripe fruit of abundant martyrdoms. Not until the end of the second century have we any trustworthy record of a British Church; but the witness then given to the extension of the faith in Britain even beyond the limits of Roman rule, renders it probable that before the close of the sub-apostolic age our country had received, through Roman soldiers or Gallic traders, the seeds of Christian truth.

2. **Conflict with Paganism.**—Persecution, although neither generally prevalent nor imperially initiated during this sub-apostolic period, had broken out in other places besides Smyrna—in Jerusalem, where aged Simeon, brother of St. James, and his successor as presiding presbyter, was crucified in the year 107; at Antioch, where probably a few years later Ignatius, its bishop, was con-

demned to exposure before wild beasts in the Roman amphitheatre; at Athens, where a writer of the time complains of Christians being imprisoned and beaten; at Rome, where Justin Martyr records the summary execution of two men simply on their confession of Christianity. The martyrdom of Ignatius is equally notable with that of Polycarp—notable on account of the dignity of the judge, the Emperor Trajan, who, on the occasion of a visit to Antioch, presided at the trial and pronounced the sentence; notable also on account of the eminence of the victim, and the union in him of heroic courage with morbid craving after martyrdom. "May I enjoy the wild beasts prepared for me," so he writes to the Christians of Rome, whither he was being conducted. "May they be eager to rush upon me! if they be unwilling, I will compel them." He fears the Roman Christians may try to procure his pardon, and beseeches them to show him no such "unseasonable kindness." "Come fire and cross; come crowds of wild beasts; come tearings and manglings, wracking of bones and hacking of limbs; come cruel tortures of the devil; only let me attain unto Jesus Christ."

The tolerant disposition of individual emperors, the intolerance of imperial statutes or traditions, and popular pagan prejudice and malice, stimulated the growth, during this period, of apologetical literature. The object of the apologists was to defend Christians against the triple calumny of atheism, disloyalty, immorality; and to plead for the recognition of Christianity by the State as a lawful and beneficent religion. The leading extant apologies of the sub-apostolic age are those addressed to Antoninus Pius by Justin Martyr, a Greek philosopher, who, after long search for truth, had found Christianity "the only secure and profitable

philosophy." He suffered martyrdom at Rome in 166 A.D. An earlier apology by Aristides, a philosopher of Athens, which was recently recovered, compares Christianity with the debased and debasing religions of the world, and, along with Justin's writings, indicates the growth of friendly relations between the Church and culture.

**3. Conflict with Gnosticism.**—While the Church thus maintained a twofold conflict with paganism without, it had also to contend with paganism within. The date of Polycarp's death marks the culmination of that Gnostic heresy of which Cerinthus (p. 11) is regarded as father, and which was virtually an attempt to paganise Christianity. The Gnostics professed to accept Christ as a divine Redeemer, and the Christian Faith as a divine revelation, but they craved after a higher knowledge (*gnosis*) than that of ordinary believers, and united with a defective Christian creed fantastic speculations about the origin of the world and of evil. On the basis of the essential evil of matter (1) they regarded the creation of the material universe as a catastrophe, due not to the Supreme God but to an inferior or hostile divinity; (2) they denied any real incarnation, holding either (like Cerinthus) that the Divine Christ merely allied Himself for a time with the human Jesus, or that the humanity of Christ was a phantom; (3) they conceived of redemption simply as deliverance of the soul from connection with matter, and believed such redemption to be attainable through the teaching of Christ, mystic communion with God, and ascetic mortification of the flesh. For the last some degenerate sects substituted gross self-indulgence, the aim in each case being the annihilation of bodily appetite. The Gnostics claimed to hold the real, original doctrine of Christ, and endeavoured to substantiate that claim by allegorical interpretation of Scripture, by

apocryphal writings ascribed to apostles, by the rejection, mutilation, or alteration of genuine Scriptures, and by the pretended possession of apostolic traditions privately handed down.<sup>1</sup>

**4. Growth of Episcopacy, Canon, and Creed.**—The gradual disappearance of those who had been associated with the apostles facilitated Gnostic misrepresentation of apostolic doctrine ; and the necessity of meeting the claim of Gnosticism to be genuine Christianity stimulated during the sub-apostolic age the growth of (1) Episcopacy. Amid competing systems of doctrine, it was regarded as a practical advantage to have in each important Christian community one prominent office-bearer, ready to testify authoritatively, in his representative capacity, to the true apostolic tradition locally preserved and transmitted. (2) The New Testament Canon. Amid Gnostic rejection of genuine and reception of spurious Scriptures, the importance was felt of a recognised list or canon of apostolic writings. Early lists varied somewhat ; but, soon after Polycarp's death, the Churches throughout the Empire were agreed generally as to what constituted the Christian Scriptures ; the only difference of opinion related to four<sup>2</sup> writings ultimately rejected and seven eventually accepted.<sup>3</sup> (3) Creed. In order to protect the Church from Gnostic intruders, and to guard its

<sup>1</sup> The leading exponents of Gnostic systems, which differed widely from each other in detail, were Basilides and Valentinus of Alexandria, Saturninus of Antioch, and Marcion of Pontus. Marcion, however, while adopting the fundamental principles of Gnosticism, rejected allegorical interpretations, disavowed secret tradition, borrowed less than other Gnostics from non-Christian sources, and professedly based his system on a mutilated Gospel of St. Luke along with ten epistles of St. Paul. The chief literary opponents of Gnosticism were Irenæus of Lyons, Tertullian of Carthage, and Hippolytus of Rome.

<sup>2</sup> Epistle of Clement (see p. 8) ; Epistle of Barnabas (not the B. of Acts) ; " Pastor " of Hermas ; and the recently-recovered " Apocalypse of St. Peter."

<sup>3</sup> Viz. Hebr., James, 2nd Pet., Jude, 2nd John, 3rd John, Rev.

converts from Gnostic seducers, the original belief in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, professed by converts at baptism, gradually expanded into the "Apostles' Creed." The present form of that Creed dates only from the sixth century, but, a few years after Polycarp's death, it existed substantially as we now have it, except four clauses, *viz.* those referring to the Descent into Hades, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, and the Forgiveness of sins. Among notable doctrines widely, though not universally, held by the sub-Apostolic Church was the expectation of a millennial reign of Christ upon earth.

**5. Worship and life.**—(1) At the time of Polycarp's martyrdom, Church worship, as we learn from Justin Martyr, was still largely non-liturgical, although the element of set forms must have been gradually increasing. Hymns sung to Christ as a Divine Being were in use, as well as the Psalter. The Gospels were read, along with the Old Testament, as Scripture; the similar use of the other New Testament books gradually followed. The Lord's Supper had been dissociated, since Trajan's time, from the Agapé, and now formed part of the Morning Service. This change had been made, partly to avoid risk of profanation, partly to silence calumny, but chiefly owing to Trajan's suppression of semi-political club-meetings, with which the Christian congregational feasts were in danger of being confounded. Soon after the close of the sub-apostolic age the earlier part of Church worship became separated, by a brief interval, from the Lord's Supper, at which only those baptized and in full communion might be present.<sup>1</sup> Before Polycarp's death the usage had become established of deacons carrying the consecrated elements, after service, to sick and

<sup>1</sup> All others were dismissed before the Communion with the formula "Missa est": hence the words "mass" and "missal."

imprisoned members. Baptism was usually administered, during this period, by triple immersion, but affusion was regarded as permissible. Catechetical instruction, and fasting by celebrant and catechumen preceded the rite. Infant baptism is first mentioned about 180 A.D. ; but Origen, writing early in the third century, declares that the practice came down from apostolic times. Adult baptism, however, even of those whose parents were Christians, continued to be frequent down to the fourth century. (2) The sub-Apostolic Church was far from being stainless ; yet Christian life, as a whole, in the age of Polycarp, is depicted in bright colours by heathen as well as Christian contemporaries. Early in the sub-apostolic age, Pliny mentions the prevalent and significant belief that Christians bound themselves every Lord's Day to chastity by a solemn oath. A few years after the close of the period, another heathen, Galen the eminent physician, testifies that they "kept themselves from carnal pleasures" ; while a third, Lucian the Satirist, marks their "incredible eagerness to help each other in straits." The curse of slavery was mitigated through considerate treatment, frequent emancipation, and recognition of the Christian slave as a brother or sister in Christ. Witness was borne against popular inhumanity by withdrawal from the gladiatorial games. In an age when manual toil was deemed servile, the Church emphasised the nobility of all lawful labour, and engraved the workman's tools upon his tomb. Christian patience and stedfastness, amid persecution and solicitation to idolatry, were notorious. The Church's care for sick and poor was conspicuous. Poor Christians fasted in order to feed more destitute brethren ;<sup>1</sup> and the extension of the Church's ministry of beneficence to heathens fulfilled the injunction *Love your enemies.*

<sup>1</sup> See the recently recovered *Apology of Aristides.*

## CHAPTER IV

### THE DECIAN PERSECUTION (249-251 A.D.); CRISIS OF CONFLICT BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE

IN 248 A.D. was celebrated the thousandth anniversary of the foundation of Rome, and fresh enthusiasm was awakened for Roman traditions and institutions, polity and religion. It was significant that in the next year took place the crisis of the conflict between Church and Empire, between the new faith and the old.

1. **Church and State between 155 and 249.**—During this interval actual persecution had been, on the whole, as in the preceding half-century, local in scope and motive, the outcome mainly of individual malice or popular fanaticism. Some emperors had been well posed towards the faith. The ~~dis~~ putable Commodus (180-192) and the brutal Caracalla (211-217) were restrained by private influences from encouraging persecution. The vicious Heliogabalus (218-222) and the virtuous Alexander Severus (222-235) favoured toleration from the standpoint of religious comprehensiveness, which led the former to regard Christianity as akin to his favourite Sun-worship, and the latter to place the bust of Christ along with that of Orpheus in his domestic sanctuary. Philip the Arabian (244-249) gave to the Christian faith so much countenance that two writers of the next century call him the

first Christian emperor. Under all these the Church had, for the most part, rest from persecution. Other emperors during this interval were prejudiced against Christianity. Marcus Aurelius (161-180), amiable and just, but wedded to Stoicism as the moral hope of mankind, had no ear for the doctrine of a rival agency of regeneration, and regarded Christian fortitude as sheer obstinacy or vain parade. Septimius (193-211), under the influence of the Egyptian priesthood, interdicted Christians from proselytising; while Maximin (235-238), a rough barbarian soldier, who had assassinated Alexander Severus, was incensed against bishops whom he believed to be his victim's political partisans. Under these emperors prosecution became frequent and persecution keen. In the reign of Aurelius pagan bitterness against Christians was intensified by a series of national calamities ascribed to their godlessness; and search for Christians, formerly prohibited, was now, along with torture, officially sanctioned. A letter, which Renan calls the "pearl of the Christian literature of the second century," describes graphically the spiritual heroism of numerous martyrs in Gaul, including Pothinus, the aged Bishop of Lyons, and Blandina, a slave-girl of fifteen. The unfavourable attitude of Septimius encouraged persecution by Egyptians, whose religion he favoured, as well as by Carthaginians to whose race he belonged; and harrowing records remain of women burned in boiling pitch at Alexandria, and thrown to wild beasts at Carthage. Still, no general organised assault on the Christians had yet been made by the imperial government, and during eleven years prior to 249 the Church enjoyed almost complete tranquillity. It was the lull before the storm.

**2. Motive, character, and issue of Decian persecution.**—This persecution marks a fresh epoch. It was universal in range and imperial in motive, the outcome

of a deliberate policy of complete suppression. The early Church stigmatised Decius as "an execrable animal." The calmer judgment of later times vindicates him from the charge of wanton brutality, and fixes on him the less heinous guilt of culpable moral blindness. Decius meant to be a reformer. He saw that the degenerate morals of the Roman citizenship were sapping the strength of the Empire, and he believed that the old Roman virtue could only be revived by restoring belief in the old Roman religion. He discerned that reverence for the ancient gods was being steadily undermined by the new "superstition"; and ignorant prejudice, along with the low morality of some Christians, blinded him to the fact that only through the new faith was moral reformation attainable. He determined to kill the viper which, he believed, was draining away the life-blood of Rome. (2) The method of persecution harmonised with the motive. Penalties were at first threatened, not inflicted; ample time was given to Christians to show, by pagan sacrifice, that they had returned to their fore-fathers' faith. This policy was largely successful. In time of peace very many had entered, or had been born within, the Church, who had no living faith in their hearts. Multitudes sacrificed; many more obtained a certificate of having sacrificed from venal or merciful officials;<sup>1</sup> imprisonment and torture caused numerous additional recantations. Yet a solid phalanx remained, who endured death or suffering, besides large numbers who escaped through concealment. Among the latter were two bishops, Dionysius of Alexandria, and Cyprian of Carthage, who administered their dioceses and encouraged confessors by messengers and letters. Among the

<sup>1</sup> Such a document, dated June 250, was recently discovered in Egypt. It contains a petition for a certificate from one Aurelius to the Commissioners of Sacrifice for Alexander Island, with the official attestation of his compliance appended.

victims were Alexander of Jerusalem, a broad-minded bishop, the friend of Origen; Babylas, Bishop of Antioch, who, after witnessing the execution of six catechumens, laid his head on the block with the words: "Lo, I come, O God, with the children Thou hast given me"; and Fabian of Rome, whose brief epitaph, "Fabian · Bishop · Martyr," may still be read on the slab of his tomb in a Roman catacomb. Origen also, though not put to death, died afterwards of tortures then undergone. (3) When the Decian persecution closed, on the emperor's death in 251, the long roll of faithful confessors constituted a spiritual triumph which overshadowed the moral defeat of widespread apostasy. In 257 the conflict was resumed by Valerian; the two most notable martyrs then were Cyprian, and Lawrence a deacon of Rome. The latter, according to a record of doubtful trustworthiness, was roasted alive on a gridiron. He remains to this day the popular saint of Italy, San Lorenzo, to whom a church is dedicated in almost every town. This outbreak under Valerian, however, was a tribulation, not a peril. The Decian conflict had proved that the Church might be oppressed, but could not be suppressed.

**3. Contemporary Church leaders.**—With the Decian persecution are associated the close of the career of the early Church's greatest theologian, and the culmination of the ministry of her most influential ecclesiastic. Under Origen, Christianity was exhibited as not only a faith, but (what Justin had already called it) a philosophy; under Cyprian, the Church ascribed to herself external as well as spiritual unity—claimed to be not only one flock but one fold. (1) **Origen** (185-254), surnamed the Adamantine from his indomitable steadfastness or irrefutable arguments, became in early youth (203 A.D.) the head of the Alexandrian Catechetical School, which was also a theological seminary. In later

life he founded a similar institution at Cæsarea. He was the Father of Biblical Criticism, and rectified, by an elaborate apparatus, the corrupted text of the Greek Old Testament. He was the first great expositor of the Bible, and wrote commentaries on all its books. He was the earliest champion of the faith against literary assault, which had been inaugurated (about 180) with the *True Word* of Celsus. Above all, Origen was the first great Christian philosopher and systematic theologian. Developing the principles of Clement, his predecessor in Alexandria, he sought to supersede the false with a true Gnosticism loyal to the Christian faith, and to show how Christianity is in essential agreement with genuine philosophy. While he broached some fanciful and heretical ideas, Origen laid the foundation of the future Nicene Creed by the doctrine of the Eternal Generation of the Son. When Christians began to speculate as to the nature of Christ's Divinity, this difficulty had presented itself: How could Christ be begotten of God, yet co-eternal with God? And if not eternal, was He very God at all? Hence arose two heresies in Origen's time --(a) that Christ was only a man whom the Spirit of God filled with divine power; (b) that Christ was very God, but not personally distinct from the Father; one divine Person manifesting Himself as Father, Son, and Spirit.<sup>1</sup> Origen met the difficulty by expounding and emphasising the truth that the generation of the Divine Son by the Father is not a particular act, implying the Son's previous non-existence, but an essential relation, subsisting from eternity. (2) **Cyprian**, originally a rhetorician, was converted in middle life, and elected, two years later (248), by popular acclamation, Bishop of Carthage. His episcopate was distinguished by strict

<sup>1</sup> The chief exponent of the first heresy was Paul of Samosata; of the second, Sabellius of Libya.

discipline, munificent charity, and indefatigable activity. During a pestilence in 252, his zealous care alike of heathens and Christians, of sick and dead, won for him universal esteem; and his brave martyrdom in 258 excited pagan sympathy as well as Christian veneration. Unfortunate schisms at Carthage and Rome, in connection with the restoration of the lapsed, led to the growth of the doctrine, largely through his influence, that the Church's unity consists not only in "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," but in one outward organisation, apart from which is no salvation. This organisation, Cyprian held, has as its sole authoritative exponent, the brotherhood of catholic bishops, the spiritual heirs of the apostles, and, as its centre of unity, the Bishop of Rome, the successor of the chief apostle, St. Peter. It needed only one step more, which Cyprian, however, did not take, in order to advance from Roman primacy to papal supremacy. Along with Cyprian's externalising view of the Church's unity was associated sacerdotal doctrine of the Church's ministry. While earlier writers paved the way for sacerdotalism by unguarded language, Cyprian expressly assigns to Christian ministers not only (what the New Testament never ascribes to them) the name of priest, but the duties and prerogatives of a priestly caste distinct from the universal priesthood of believers. He regards the clergy as a mediating agency between God and man, and as the sole divinely-authorised channel of heavenly grace.

**4. Growth of ritual.**—To the development at this epoch of a more elaborate ritual two diverse causes contributed: the previous entrance into the Church of nominal Christians to whom the earlier simplicity of Christian worship appeared bald in comparison with pagan rites; and the increasing severity of persecution, which prompted the Church to the use of a more impressive ceremonial.

at baptism, to fortify the new convert against apostasy. Between the time of Polycarp and Cyprian, the word Church had come to denote not merely, as at first, a community of believers, but a building set apart for worship ; the observance of Whitsuntide<sup>1</sup> had been established ; and liturgies, although not prescribed or, perhaps, even written, had come into widespread use. Baptism was now preceded by catechetical training sometimes extending over years, and by a protracted vigil on the previous night. At the celebration the candidate solemnly renounced the devil and surrendered himself to Christ ; the baptismal water was consecrated, and the forehead of the baptized signed with the cross. The administration was followed by the holy kiss as the symbol of welcome into the Church, by anointing in token of spiritual unction, by investiture with a white robe as the emblem of a purified life, by the tasting of milk and honey typical of spiritual nourishment, and (after an interval) by the imposition of the bishop's hands as confirmation. The impressiveness of the Sacrament had been enhanced ; its spirituality, through a portion of such ceremonial, had been obscured.

5. **Growth of Puritanism.**—The extensive apostasy during the Decian persecution brought to a crisis a long-existing movement in the direction of stricter discipline. This Puritan tendency had manifested itself in the latter part of the second century under Montanus, a Phrygian presbyter, who held millenarian views and made fanatical claims to inspiration. He protested strongly against the laxity of Church discipline and especially the readmission, even after

<sup>1</sup> The first mention of Pentecost as a Christian Festival occurs towards the close of the second century ; the earliest distinct traces of the observance of Christmas on the 25th December, and of a special commemoration of Ascension Day, belong to the fourth century.

penitence, of those who had lapsed into apostasy or other deadly sin. The most distinguished Montanist was Tertullian of Carthage (160-220), otherwise eminent as the most eloquent early defender of Christianity and the most trenchant assailant of Gnosticism. His Puritanism appears in his denunciation of flight from persecution, and his opposition to the restoration of the lapsed ; in his condemnation of second marriage, and commendation of excessive fasting ; in his warnings against female adornment, and depreciation of military service as incompatible with Christian fidelity.<sup>1</sup> Early in the third century, Hippolytus, a leading bishop or presbyter near Rome, while avoiding Montanism, headed a Puritan revolt against two successive Roman bishops on account of their loose discipline and unworthy character. In 251 the movement issued in the Novatian schism, occasioned by the readmission at Rome, under Cornelius the Bishop, of a large number who had apostatised amid persecution. An influential party elected Novatian, an austere and learned presbyter, as rival bishop. The Roman Church, as a whole, supported Cornelius ; but the schism spread, and continued, especially in North Africa, down to the fifth century. The Puritan principles of the Montanists and Novatianists have been frequently reproduced, in association sometimes with heresy, oftener with extreme orthodoxy ; and they have exerted a one-sided, yet, on the whole, salutary influence, as a needful counteractive to the stronger tendency towards undue laxity of discipline and life.

<sup>1</sup> On account of pagan usages to which the soldiers were expected to conform. Tertullian commends a Christian soldier who endured punishment and risked his life rather than wear a laurel wreath.

## CHAPTER V

### THE FIRST CHRISTIAN EMPEROR AND THE FIRST CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT (312-324 A.D.)

CHRISTIANITY was raised with seeming abruptness from the dungeon to the throne. The last imperial persecution closed in 311 A.D. In 312 a Christian emperor reigned ; twelve years later Christianity superseded paganism as the religion of the Empire. What appears, however, revolution was only accelerated evolution. This coronation, as it were, of Christianity was the formal recognition of a superior power already manifested by two centuries and a half of missionary extension, organising activity, and bracing conflict.

1. The last imperial persecution (303-311) followed a period of over forty years of virtual toleration. The Emperor Diocletian was a man of pacific and benevolent temper, while his wife and daughter favoured the Christian faith. He was induced to resume the old policy of persecution partly by the importunity of his junior colleague, Galerius, a fanatical pagan, partly by the influence of aggressive Neoplatonists,<sup>1</sup> whose aim was to

<sup>1</sup> Neoplatonism arose in Alexandria in the third century. It emphasised the unity and spirituality of God, in mystical communion with whom the highest form of religion was held to consist ; and it sought to harmonise the myths of polytheism with its philosophy by allegorical interpretation.

supersede alike the old idolatry and the new faith by a reformed heathenism ; partly by his own conviction that only through imperial unity, to which religious uniformity was deemed indispensable, could the Empire be fortified against barbarian invasion. The persecution was a failure. Multitudes, indeed, including large numbers of clergy, apostatised ; churches were demolished, sacred scriptures destroyed ; and the severity of the assault may be estimated from the fact that in Palestine alone the roll of martyrs included a hundred notable names. But a vast society, which included at least a tenth of the population and reckoned its confessors by tens of thousands, was too influential to be overpowered, too full of vitality to be paralysed. Diocletian's mind became affected ; in 305 he abdicated. In 311 Galerius, in concert with Licinius and Constantine, his junior colleagues, issued, on his death-bed, an edict of toleration, which permitted Christians to rebuild their churches, and requested them to remember the emperors in their prayers !

**2. Conversion of Constantine.**—The imperial surrender roused aggressive paganism to a final assault on Christianity under the rival emperor Maxentius. At the battle of Milvian Bridge, near Rome, in 312, Maxentius and Constantine represented not only opposite factions but antagonistic faiths. The former prepared for the conflict by special pagan rites and incantations. The latter, already inclined to Christianity, beheld, either in a vision of the night or in a fancied apparition by day (suggested by some natural phenomenon), a luminous cross in the sky, with the inscription, "By this conquer." Christ appeared to him afterwards in a dream, and commanded him to fashion a standard after the likeness of the sacred emblem.<sup>1</sup> Constantine recognised in this

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius, on the professed authority of Constantine, represents the cross in the sky as a reality ; but Lactantius, writing only three

twofold experience a supernatural revelation and a divine call. The cross was emblazoned on the imperial banner and stamped on the soldiers' shields. He entered the battle as the champion of the Faith, and a decisive victory completed the conversion of the first Christian emperor.

**3. Establishment of Christianity.**—By the edict of 311 Christianity became a lawful, by the conversion of Constantine a favoured, religion; in 324, under Constantine as sole emperor, it was enthroned. Already he had conspicuously befriended Church and Faith. He had restored to the Christians their confiscated property, and conferred on their clergy the civil immunities enjoyed by the pagan priesthood. He had bestowed on the Church public money and legalised its acceptance of private bequests. Sunday had been proclaimed a day of rest by an edict which refrained, indeed, from mentioning, but none the less facilitated, Lord's Day worship. His policy now culminated in the supersession of heathenism by Christianity as the imperial religion.<sup>1</sup> While pagan rites, if not immoral, were tolerated, official sacrifices ceased. Disused pagan temples and public buildings were transformed into churches; letters were issued and discourses preached by the emperor in favour of Christianity and against idolatry. A form of prayer, distinctly monotheistic and suggestively, though not explicitly, Christian, was introduced into the army. The new capital, Constantinople, was made a Christian city, within which no pagan temple was to be reared, from which no smoke of heathen sacrifice was to rise. The humane

years after the battle, speaks merely of a dream. Eusebius probably misunderstood Constantine's testimony.

<sup>1</sup> This was not the first instance, however, of Christianity being established as a National Religion. Earlier in the fourth century, and beyond the Roman Empire, a National Christian Church had been constituted in Armenia through the influence of Gregory Illuminator.

spirit of Christianity was infused into imperial legislation. Crucifixion was abolished, infanticide repressed, emancipation encouraged, gladiatorial "games" interdicted,<sup>1</sup> systematic provision made for the poor. We feel "beneath the toga of the Roman lawgiver the warmth of a Christian heart."

**4. Constantine's character and motives.**—Constantine was no pattern Christian. His personal chastity, indeed, humane legislation, religious zeal, and continued virtue amid fulsome flattery, command our respect; but the execution of a boy-nephew for political security, and of his own son Crispus in a fit of suspicious passion, are a lurid commentary on the exaggerated panegyric of his contemporary Eusebius, and on his later canonisation by the Greek Church. Still, there is no good reason to doubt the reality, however we may question the quality, of his Christian belief. The office of Pontifex Maximus (head of the pagan priesthood), which he held for life, was regarded by him, doubtless, as a political more than a religious dignity; and his postponement of baptism until death approached was due, probably, to the fear of falling into sins which, after baptism, it might be difficult to expiate. His establishment of Christianity, however, had a political as well as a religious motive. The same reason which helped to make Diocletian the Church's persecutor contributed to make Constantine its patron. The latter, equally with the former, aimed at imperial consolidation through religious uniformity; but he had statesmanly insight and foresight to discern that the new faith possessed an inward vitality as well as an outward organisation prophetic of victory, and that,

<sup>1</sup> The interdict was at first enforced only in Constantinople; and gladiatorial contests lingered at Rome until 404, when a monk, Telemachus, leapt into the arena and parted the combatants at the cost of his life. Self-sacrifice succeeded where law had failed.

in the presence of Christianity favoured and dominant, paganism was destined to disappear.

**5. Religious policy after Constantine.**—His son, Constantius, and most of his successors, unfortunately departed from Constantine's moderate policy of uniting the general toleration of heathenism with the establishment of Christianity. They attempted to suppress paganism not by conversion but by coercion. Its brief reinstatement by Julian the Apostate (361-3) was followed ere long by spoliation of its endowments, demolition of its temples, interdict of its rites, destruction of its anti-Christian literature, and prohibition, ultimately, even of pagan profession—a policy against which leaders of the Church, as Augustine and Chrysostom, uttered only a wavering protest. The inevitable issue was the entrance of careless multitudes into the Church's membership, of ambitious courtiers into its ministry, of pagan usages into its worship and life. Constantine's policy, wisely pursued, might have resulted gradually in the world becoming a church; unwise development of it and divergence from it issued in the Church being transformed into the likeness of the world.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE FIRST GENERAL COUNCIL; THE NICENE CREED (325 A.D.)

IN the summer of 325 there assembled at Nicæa in Bithynia 318 bishops, representing almost every region of Christendom from Persia to Spain, from Scythia to Abyssinia. It was the first General Council of the Church, convened by the first Christian emperor. Its membership included not merely cultured ecclesiastics, but some, like Spiridion the shepherd of Cyprus, who united the office of bishop with a humble calling; and many, besides the one-eyed and one-legged Copt Paphnutius, bore in their scarred or mutilated persons tokens of faithful confession. They met to determine a vital point of doctrine—in what sense Christ is God.

1. **Outbreak of Arian controversy.**—In the previous century Origen had vindicated the divinity of our Lord by the doctrine of His eternal generation. He was less successful in conserving the unity of the Godhead, and had even spoken of the Son as second or subordinate God, whose essence or substance was different from the Father's. Hence arose two theological parties. The one held firmly Origen's dogma of eternal generation, but maintained the unity of the Godhead by declaring Father and Son to be mysteriously One in essence. The other

took its stand on Origen's statement of the Son's subordination, and argued that the divine unity could only be upheld by renouncing the Son's eternity, and regarding Him as the First and Highest of creatures, to whom the Eternal Father had communicated divine dignity and power. In Alexandria the first party was led by the bishop, Alexander, and inspired by a young deacon of great acumen and learning, Athanasius ; the second by a presbyter of the city, noted for ascetic life and pulpit eloquence, Arius. The presbyter, not without plausibility, charged his bishop with Sabellian subversion (p. 27) of the Son's distinct personality ; the bishop, with more reason, accused his presbyter of denying to the Son any real divinity. The conflict became keen ; the truth at stake was felt to be vital ; if Arius was right, not only was Christ less than divine, but to worship Him opened the return to polytheism. At an Egyptian synod, in 321, Arius was deposed and, along with his adherents, excommunicated. The controversy, instead of being thus settled, became more vehement and spread to other lands. Laymen as well as clergy contended ; debates in synods were echoed at the market and parodied in the theatre.

2. **Convention of Nicene Council.**—To Constantine, relying on Christianity as an instrument of imperial union, discord within the Church was intolerable. He first attempted to end the conflict by imperiously enjoining both parties to acknowledge each other in Church communion. When this method failed, owing to Alexander's remonstrance, the emperor began to realise the ecclesiastical magnitude, if not the theological significance, of the question ; and, accordingly, a General Council of the Episcopate of Christendom was convened at Nicæa, "a city," he said, "fitting for the synod—the city of victory" (Niké). In an opening address to the

assembly (over which at ordinary meetings a bishop presided) Constantine dwelt characteristically not on the importance of arriving at truth, but on the necessity of restoring concord. "Discord in the Church I regard as more grievous than external warfare; delay not, therefore, to dissolve all controversies by the laws of peace."

**3. Adoption of Nicene Creed.**—The Council consisted of three parties: (1) that of Alexander, composed mainly of Egyptian and Western bishops, whose real leader was Athanasius, although, not being a bishop, he had no vote, but only the privilege of debate as Alexander's representative; (2) the Arians, about twenty in all, whose head was Eusebius of Nicomedia; (3) a middle party comprising the majority, led by Eusebius of Cæsarea, the historian, who held, against Arius, Origen's doctrine of eternal generation, but shrank from the Athanasian dogma of Father and Son being of one essence, as tending towards Sabellianism. The Council first condemned an Arian creed presented by Eusebius of Nicomedia. The other Eusebius then proposed an old confession in which Christ was declared to be "God of God," and "Begotten before all ages." This formula the majority were disposed to accept and impose as the standard of orthodoxy; but the significant willingness of the Arians to sign it gave point to the plea of Athanasius, that, however adequate in itself, it was insufficient for the present purpose. He persuaded the Council to add certain clauses which affirmed more explicitly our Lord's true and eternal Godhead, and which declared Him to be of one essence (*Homousios*) with the Father. Thus arose the Nicene Formula, which, although preceded in actual use by the Apostles' Creed, was the first Confession authoritatively imposed on Christendom. The same anxiety for unity, which made Constantine at first desire to treat Christ's true divinity as an open question, now

determined him to enforce conformity. Eventually the new creed was subscribed by all except Arius and two Egyptian bishops, who were banished as recusants—the inauguration of the baneful practice of Christian governments inflicting civil penalties for religious opinions.

**4. Temporary eclipse and ultimate triumph of Nicene Creed.**—The apparent settlement of 325 proved to be the starting-point of fresh conflict. The middle party repented of their acceptance of the Homooousian clause, became known as semi-Arians, and joined with the Arians in accomplishing, through local synods, the virtual reversal of the Nicene Decrees. Constantine, finding that the Council had not produced harmony, reverted to his original policy of enforcing toleration. Arius was recalled to sign an indefinite creed, and only his sudden death (336) prevented his restoration to Church communion at Constantinople; while Athanasius, who had refused to readmit him, was banished to Treves. After Constantine's death in 337, the movement against the Nicene Formula advanced under Constantius, whose sympathies were on the Arian side. The lapse of one or two prominent Athanasians into Sabellianism strengthened the prejudice against the Homooousios. The reaction culminated in 359, when, under Court pressure, two synods at Seleucia and Rimini, representing respectively Eastern and Western Christendom, adopted a vague and vapid creed, in which the main points in dispute are ignored, and the Son is declared simply to "resemble the Father in all things according to the Scriptures." To this period, when almost the whole western as well as eastern episcopate, through constraint by the Court or weariness of the conflict, acquiesced in the abandonment of the Nicene Confession, the saying of Jerome (see p. 47) refers: "The whole world groaned, and was astounded to find itself Arian."

Ere long a counter-reaction ensued. On the death of Constantius in 361, the Western Church was relieved from external pressure, and resumed its support of the Nicene cause under Hilary of Poictiers, "the Athanasius of the West." In the East, adherents of the middle view, who had allied themselves with Arians to rid themselves of the Homoousian formula, now, when Arianism had attained supremacy, gradually detached themselves from the alliance, and drew towards the Nicene party, with whom they held in common our Lord's true divinity and eternal generation. Their original suspicion of the term *Homoousios*<sup>1</sup> was allayed by the conciliatory explanations of Athanasius and (after his death in 373) of three notable Cappadocian bishops, Basil the Great, his brother Gregory of Nyssa, and the friend of both, Gregory of Nazianzos. The persecution of both semi-Arian and Nicene ecclesiastics by the Arian emperor, Valens (367-378), cemented the union ; and gradually all believers in Christ's true divinity came to recognise in the Nicene Formula the most effective and least objectionable safeguard against heresy. The way was thus prepared for the convention at Constantinople of a second General Council by Theodosius I. in 381, when the Creed of Nicæa was reinstated, never again to be displaced.<sup>2</sup> Henceforth Arianism was excluded from the Roman Empire. It long retained its hold, however, on the Goths, whose apostle, Ulfila,<sup>3</sup> had been consecrated as

<sup>1</sup> The semi-Arians wished to substitute *Homoiousios* (of like essence) but the Athanasians objected to it as suggestive of two gods.

<sup>2</sup> The Creed, however, as reaffirmed by the Council of Chalcedon (451) contained several minor variations, and the important supplementary clause (already in actual use before 374), which enunciated the Holy Spirit's true divinity. From the sixth century the Western Church began to insert also the memorable word "Filioque," which declared the Spirit to proceed from Son as well as from Father (see p. 100).

<sup>3</sup> Ulfila (311-388) was a Goth by birth, but of Cappadocian de-

missionary bishop at Constantinople during the Arian ascendancy ; and also on the Vandals and other barbarians Christianised through Gothic influence. Not till the seventh century does Arianism disappear from view.

5. Athanasius towers above all his contemporaries as the hero of the Arian controversy, during which he was five times exiled, and his life repeatedly imperilled. Most clearly of all the controversialists he discerned the momentous issue, and the inconsistency as well as danger of semi-Arian compromise. Amid the vacillation of faint-hearted friends and the hostility of imperial and ecclesiastical enemies, he upheld the cause of truth when its prospects were darkest, and prepared the way for its final triumph. Apart, also, from the great doctrine of which he was the persecuted and persistent champion, his sustained and, at one stage, almost solitary resistance to an oppressive Court, along with his witness against a subservient Church, taught mankind the noble lesson enshrined in the saying, “Athanasius contra mundum.”<sup>1</sup>

scent. He translated the Bible into Gothic, omitting, according to Philostorgius, a historian of the fifth century, the Books of Kings, lest they should excite the warlike disposition of his nation.

<sup>1</sup> Athanasius against the world.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE SACK OF ROME BY ALARIO (410 A.D.); AUGUSTINE AND HIS TWO CHIEF CONTEMPORARIES

IN 410 took place the sack of Rome by Alaric the Goth, which marks the first notable stage in the downfall of the Western Empire. Alaric had first been hired by Rome as an auxiliary; imperial weakness tempted him, imperial perfidy goaded him, to become an invader. In three successive years he appeared at the gates of the capital. On the first occasion he accepted a bribe to depart; on the second, he enthroned a rival emperor; on the third, when what he deemed fair terms were declined, his Goths entered the city to slaughter, pillage, and destroy. Within a few months the great warrior was dead; but he had broken the spell which had seemed to preserve the Eternal City inviolate since the mythical sack of Brennus the Gaul; henceforth Rome, Italy, the West as a whole, became the prey of successive barbarian hordes.

1. Overthrow of Paganism in Rome.—According to early legend, Alaric replied to a monk, who entreated him to spare the city, that a mysterious voice urged him on. The story expressed a widespread conviction that the Goth was a divine instrument of religious progress. Up till 410 A.D., Rome, although the western capital of

a Christian empire, was largely pagan. The repressive statutes against heathenism could not there be enforced. The majority of the Senate and aristocracy boldly professed paganism ; numerous temples were still filled with worshippers and enriched with offerings. After the sack of the city and occupation of the country by the Goths all this was changed. Alaric and his host were Christians, though Arian in creed ; and pagan sanctuaries were ravaged, while Christian churches were spared. The patricians were suddenly impoverished or driven into exile ; so that even where temples remained, their patrons disappeared, and the Church was allowed to consecrate the disused edifices for Christian worship. Paganism ceased to be influential in Rome ; what imperial legislation failed to effect in half a century was accomplished by Gothic devastation in a week.

**2. Growth of Papal power.**—After Alaric's invasion imperial power in Rome itself sank never to rise ; Ravenna, protected on one side by the sea, on the other by marshes, became the seat of an enfeebled administration. Yet Rome was too great to become obscure, and the place of secular power, vacated by a waning empire, was gradually assumed by a waxing papacy. Innocent I., the Roman bishop at the time of the sack, became the virtual head of the citizenship ; a generation later, no imperial army, but a Roman embassy headed by Leo I., caused Attila the Hun, after receiving a ransom, to withdraw. While the city lay prostrate and impoverished, Innocent (412) advanced the claim of his See to decide, on appeal, "all greater cases throughout the West." By 500, the title pope (papa), hitherto given to all western bishops, began to be restricted to the bishop of Rome.

**3. Growth of Monasticism.**—Amid the social trouble

and political upheaval which Alaric introduced, a movement destined to become a power in Christendom received a potent stimulus—monasticism. As a Christian institution it originated early in the fourth century, although its germs appear in the preceding age. It arose in Egypt, where monastic life had long been known among pagans and Jews. Anthony, the Coptic saint, who lived for over half a century in the desert, is reckoned the “patriarch of Christian monks,” the “childless father of an innumerable seed.” Monasticism began in the form of hermit life, devout, ascetic, celibate; ere long it assumed also the phase of brotherhoods living together in pious seclusion. The first great impulse to the movement was given by the establishment of Christianity as the imperial faith. In times of persecution, aspirations after a higher than ordinary religious life found satisfaction in faithful Christian profession; now, when profession was general, they sought realisation in withdrawal from secularised Christian society. Monasticism at first advanced most in the East, where Basil the Great drew up a monastic rule substantially in force to this day. In the more practical West, notwithstanding Augustine’s approval and Jerome’s advocacy, the progress of the movement was slower. Jovinian of Rome and others boldly denounced it; only in Gaul, under Martin, the soldier-saint and bishop of Tours, it attained, during the fourth century, marked success. From Alaric’s invasion its growth into importance in the West may be dated. The wreck of earthly hopes and fortunes, which Gothic devastation entailed, caused multitudes of men and women to turn for solace to a life of devotion. Many more, amid political instability, entered monastery or convent as a refuge from real or fancied peril; while for others sudden impoverishment made the plain but sure monastic fare a welcome provision. Thus social straits

combined with religious aspirations to stimulate the growth of the movement.

**4. St. Augustine.**—Contemporaneous with the humiliation of Rome in 410 was the elevation of the most outstanding figure of ancient Christendom to the pinnacle of his fame. The sack of Rome drove many leading fugitives to North Africa, and brought them within the range of Augustine's immediate influence. It became also the occasion of his greatest work being composed, the *City of God*, in answer to pagan taunts that Rome had fallen through neglect of the old Roman gods. Not Christian impiety, but heathen vice, he retorted, had caused the downfall; and he shows how the idea of an eternal city, whose realisation had been vainly sought in Rome, was fulfilled in the Christian Church, the true City of God. Augustine was born in 354 at Tagaste in Numidia. He passed in early manhood through various phases of religious and irreligious experience—godless sensuality, Manichean heresy,<sup>1</sup> blank scepticism, Platonic aspiration—until, at the age of thirty-three, the preaching of Ambrose at Milan, the study of St. Paul, and the tears and prayers of his mother Monica, accomplished his conversion. In 395 he became Bishop of Hippo, where he lived, wrote, and laboured for thirty-eight years, making it the spiritual centre of Latin Christendom, sending forth thence a constant stream of theological literature, standing out as leading champion of Church and Faith against schism and heresy, rearing for himself, without selfish aim, an empire of religious influence not only in

<sup>1</sup> Manicheism (so called from Mani its founder in the third century) was an amalgam of Parseeism, Buddhism, and Christianity. Akin to Gnosticism, it identified evil with matter. It represented the universe as under the dominion of two rival principles of Light and Darkness, and man as composed of elements derived from both principles. Christ was a divine Prophet, sent to emancipate elements of light from those of darkness, and Mani himself was the promised Paraclete.

his own but in every succeeding age. In the sphere of doctrine, Augustine is most notable as the opponent of Pelagius,<sup>1</sup> who held that every man is born free from sinful taint, and limited divine grace to the bestowal of natural capacity for righteousness and to external Christian privilege. Augustine impressed upon Western theology the mournful truth of inborn corruption, and the consequent necessity in every case, with a view to regeneration and holiness, not only of the outward revelations and ordinances but of the inward operations and impulses of divine grace. He is claimed alike by Romanist and by Protestant. The former pleads his authority in favour of ecclesiastical tradition as, along with Scripture, the Rule of Faith; in favour also of baptismal regeneration, and of that dogma of the Virgin's exemption from actual transgressions which is the root of Mariolatry. The latter points to Augustine's firm grasp of the great Pauline doctrine of salvation by free grace, which, after centuries of obscuration, was restored to light by Luther; to his views also of the spiritual presence and communication of Christ in the Holy Supper, which testify beforehand against transubstantiation and anticipate the teaching of Calvin. Apart from theology, Christendom owes to Augustine the elevating influence of a singularly noble character. In him the passionate warmth of the African nature becomes a glowing enthusiasm of devotion to Christ, a holy intensity of zeal for human salvation, a fervent solicitude for the triumph of truth. His *Confessions*, which lay bare his early inner as well as outer experience, not self-complacently, like those of Rousseau, but with the sacred purpose of magnifying divine grace, and providing beacon-lights for future voyagers on the sea of life, remain to this day among the

<sup>1</sup> A British monk who visited Rome, Africa, and Palestine early in the fifth century. His chief disciple was Celestius, an Irish Scot.

most precious gems of autobiography, and the most valued aids to spiritual progress. In the beginning of this work occurs the beautiful saying which Augustine's own life exemplified: "Thou hast made us for Thee, and our heart is restless until it rest in Thee."

5. **Contemporaries of St. Augustine.**—Of these, the most illustrious among Latin fathers was St. Jerome; among Greek, St. Chrysostom. (1) Jerome (340-420) was a native of Dalmatia, educated at Rome. A zealous propagator of monasticism, he founded a monastery at Bethlehem, and spent there a large part of his life. He is indisputably the most learned father of ancient Latin Christendom. The great work of his life is a Latin version of Scripture (afterwards called the Vulgate) which superseded an older translation, and became, first popularly, then authoritatively, the Bible of the Western Church, and the mother of many vernacular versions. A marvellous monument of critical learning for that age, it unites fidelity with freedom in its rendering, clearness with grace in its style. Strangely, this work, which later ages treated as on a level with original Scripture, was at first denounced for its impious divergences from the Septuagint,<sup>1</sup> which was then widely regarded as inspired. (2) John Chrysostom (*i.e.* Golden-mouthed) was born at Antioch about 350 A.D. It was with special allusion to his mother, Anthusa, that Libanius, a notable pagan rhetorician, exclaimed, "Heavens! what women these Christians have!" Chrysostom himself, he declared, would have been his (Libanius') worthiest successor as teacher of rhetoric, "had not the Christians stolen him." His pulpit eloquence (whence his surname) became famous at Antioch, and led to his promotion, in 398, to the See of Constantinople. There his zeal as a reformer

<sup>1</sup> This Greek translation of the Old Testament (made in the third century B.C.) was habitually used by the New Testament writers.

of clerical discipline and his fearless exposure of fashionable vice stirred up the enmity of clergy and court, particularly that of the pleasure-loving Empress Eudoxia, to whom he is said to have alluded in preaching under the name Herodias. Deposed on flimsy pretexts, he died, an exile, in 407, with the words on his lips, "Glory to God for all things." Thirty years later, his remains were brought to Constantinople for honourable burial, and Theodosius II. publicly asked forgiveness on his knees for the wrongs inflicted by his parents on the departed saint. Chrysostom's homilies and commentaries illustrate the Antiochene, as distinguished from the more prevalent Alexandrian method of Bible exposition. The latter, adopted by most Western fathers, magnified the allegorical, minimising the literal sense, and scarcely noted either the historical setting of Scripture or the varied characteristics of its writers. The former anticipated the main principles of modern interpretation, emphasised the literal, while subordinating the allegorical significance, took full account of the human element in the Bible, and adopted views of inspiration compatible with candid acknowledgment of minor historical discrepancies.

## CHAPTER VIII

### REPULSE OF HEATHENISM AT CHALONS ; CONDEMNATION OF HERESY AT CHALCEDON (451 A.D.)

THE autumn of 451 is memorable for two diverse yet analogous events in Christendom. At Chalons, Europe was saved from being overwhelmed by pagan Huns, who imperilled its Christian civilisation ; at Chalcedon condemnation was pronounced upon heresies which obscured fundamental Christian truth.

I. BATTLE OF CHALONS.—Attila the Hun, called by Christians the Scourge of God, by himself the Dread of the World, was a very different invader from Alaric the Goth. Alaric was a professed Christian, not devoid of Christian instincts ; Attila was a pagan Tartar, who boasted to be the descendant of Nimrod, and aimed at turning Europe into a vast hunting-ground. He bore the very sword, mysteriously recovered—so he declared—which his race had anciently worshipped as a war-god ; and for ten years, from his capital on the Danube, he had devastated Europe from the Black Sea to the Rhine. In 451 he crossed this river, to extend his virtual sovereignty westward to the Atlantic. It was a crisis in the history of Christendom. Roman and Goth forgot for the time their mutual hostility, and united against the common foe of both, and of the Christianity to which both adhered. Disciplined Roman legions under Aetius

the ablest imperial general of that age, fought beside impetuous Teutonic hosts under Theodoric, the most potent Gothic king of the time. After a prolonged conflict, in which 160,000 men were slain, the hitherto invincible Huns were vanquished. Attila was driven back across the Rhine; and although afterwards he ravaged the North of Italy, and drove the citizens of Padua and Aquileia into those islets of the Adriatic which grew into Venice, his career of conquest had been effectually checked. At Chalons Europe was saved from Tartar rule, and the way was prepared for the ascendancy of the Franks, half a century later, under "the most Christian king Clovis," the early forerunner of Charlemagne.

II. COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON.—While Roman and Teuton defended Christendom against heathenism, six hundred bishops were assembled in the ancient city of Chalcedon, on the eastern shore of the Dardanelles, to protect Christianity from a series of heresies relating to the Incarnation.

1. **Apollinarianism.**—In the latter part of the fourth century, Apollinaris, Bishop of Laodicea, a friend of Athanasius, in recoil from Arian denial of Christ's true divinity, infringed on His full humanity. He felt the difficulty of veritable Godhead co-existing in one person with complete manhood, of divine perfections with human limitations; and he concluded that the God-man must consist of a human body and sentient soul united with the divine Son of God, who took the place of the spirit or mind in ordinary men. Apollinaris thus trenchéd seriously on the incarnation, ascribing to Christ "a true body" but not "a reasonable soul." His views were inconsistent with our Lord's recorded growth in wisdom, undermined the reality of His brotherhood and the power of His sympathy, detracted from the significance of His example and from the full vicariousness of His sacrifice.

**2. Nestorianism.**—Early in the fifth century another section of those who loyally accepted the Nicene Creed lapsed into vital error—the followers of Nestorius, who became patriarch of Constantinople in 428. In his inaugural sermon, with unconscious irony, he called on Theodosius II. to aid him against heretics, and promised in turn to help the Emperor against the Persians. Within a year he himself was branded as the heresiarch of his time. Nestorius realised the same difficulty as Apollinaris; and while the latter had tried to solve it by the sacrifice of Christ's complete humanity, Nestorius attempted a solution at the cost of His single personality. In his zeal to emphasise the God-man's two natures, he ascribed to Him two persons. The historical occasion of the Nestorian controversy was the novel practice of calling the Virgin "Mother of God." This designation Nestorius strongly opposed. So far he was right; the growth of Mariolatry justified, and the Reformed Church endorsed, his timely protest. But, in stating his objections, he is said to have spoken of Jesus as simply the organ of the Divine Son, and to have described the relation between Christ's two natures as not a personal union but a moral connection. The chief antagonist of Nestorius was Cyril of Alexandria, an earnest and scholarly but impetuous and imperious man, who was instigated not only by zeal for theological truth, but by the ecclesiastical rivalry between Alexandria and Constantinople. His argument, however, was irresistible, that the logical outcome of Nestorian views was the denial of the Incarnation and the substitution of God and a man for the God-man.

**3. Monophysitism.**—Recoil from the Nestorian heresy of a double person led to the opposite error of a single nature in Christ, for which some questionable language of Cyril had paved the way. Those who maintained this

heresy were at first called Eutychians, from Eutyches a monk of Constantinople, the earliest distinct propounder of the doctrine, and afterwards Monophysites (*i.e.* up-holders of one nature), from the phase of error set forth. They substituted fusion for union of natures, and so detracted both from the divinity and from the humanity of our Lord. Their doctrine involved the position that with the birth of Christ a new order of Being came into existence, neither God nor man, but half-God, half-man. Thus, once more, the Incarnation was virtually nullified.

4. Doctrinal decree of Chalcedon.—Apollinarianism had already been condemned by the Council of Constantinople in 381, and Nestorianism by a third General Council at Ephesus in 431. Monophysitism had been first condemned by a local synod at Constantinople in 448, but afterwards approved by a would-be General Council at Ephesus in 449, which was stigmatised as a Synod of Robbers on account of the physical force employed on the Monophysite side. The Council of Chalcedon anathematised all three heresies, and formulated the truth as to the relation of our Lord's two natures in a notable decree, which declares Christ to be complete both in Godhead and manhood; to have not only a human body, but a rational human soul; to be "one and the same Christ, of (or in) two natures, united indissolubly and inseparably but without intermingling or passing over into each other; the distinction of the natures being in no wise abolished by their union, but the properties of each nature being retained, and combined only in the unity of the person." The inscrutable mystery of the Incarnation no Council could fully solve; but this decree erected signal-lights to keep the Church from wrecking, on diverse rocks of error, the precious truth that Christ was God and man.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The decree of Chalcedon is succinctly embodied in the Shorter Catechism, Q. 21, 22.

**5. Issue of Council.**—Apollinarianism had not long survived its originator, who died in 390. Nestorianism had already been excluded from the Empire, and its author had died in exile about 439. After the Council of Chalcedon, the expulsion of Nestorians was re-enforced ; but they had meanwhile found an asylum in Persia, and their missionary zeal caused Christianity to be widely diffused in the farther East. In the thirteenth century the Nestorian patriarch had twenty metropolitan bishops under his supervision. Mahometan repression, however, afterwards reduced the sect to petty dimensions. It still exists in Armenia, Kurdistan, and Malabar. Monophysitism was too strong to be extruded from the Empire even after it had been anathematised by the Church. In Egypt and Syria, especially, a large population adhered to its creed, which they embodied in the liturgical prayer : “Holy God, who hast been crucified for us, have mercy upon us.” Several emperors favoured the heresy, or tried to effect a theological compromise with a view to ecclesiastical union : the issue was unprofitable word-strife as to whether Christ had one or two wills, and if one, whether it was singly or doubly exercised. In the seventh century, the controversy was overshadowed by the rise of Mahometanism ; but Monophysitism was never extinguished ; it is found to this day among the Copts, Syrians, and Armenians. Christendom as a whole, however, ignoring later distinctions and refinements of statement, has adhered to the decree of Chalcedon as the exposition (so far as that is possible) of the truth of the Incarnation.

**6. Attitude of Western Church.**—Western Christendom was represented at Chalcedon by two legates from Leo I. of Rome, and on a letter of his the doctrinal decree was based ; but the controversies involved excited little interest in the West, while Pelagianism,

although formally condemned at Ephesus in 431 occupied little attention in the East. It was characteristic of the more speculative Eastern Church to concern itself with questions as to how God exists in the likeness of men ; of the more practical Western Church to be agitated with the question which Pelagius raised, how man is restored to the likeness of God. Yet, after all, the controversy was in both spheres essentially the same, viz. how far God, in order to save mankind, really and personally enters into human nature : in the one case, into the human race through the incarnation of the Word ; in the other, into the individual soul through the operation of the Spirit. Under the guidance, primarily of Athanasius, a man blameless from youth, but familiar with the notorious depravity of Alexandria, the Eastern Church realised that, for the renewal of the race in the image of God, nothing could suffice short of the saving embrace of humanity by God in the mystery of real incarnation. Under Augustine, who had personally sounded, as a youthful profligate, the depths of human sin, the Western Church realised that, for the salvation of the individual nature from its own corrupt self, nothing availed short of the prior and personal entrance of God into each soul in the mystery of a genuine regeneration.

III. EVANGELISATION OF IRELAND.—About eleven years before the Council of Chalcedon, Ireland received a missionary, through whom she herself became the mother of a race of missionaries. Early in the fifth century, a boy of sixteen, called Succat, the son of a Christian deacon, was stolen from his home on the shore of the Clyde, and sold as a slave to an Irish chief. After six years he escaped and ultimately reached his father's house ; but a vision, in which a letter seemed to reach him with the superscription, "The Voice of the Irish," constrained him to make the Christian retaliation of

Imparting spiritual liberty to the land of his bondage ; and Succat, the former British slave, became St. Patrick, the Apostle of Ireland.<sup>1</sup> Doubts overhang the regularity of his episcopal consecration, which is conveniently referred by later legends to the Bishop of Rome ; but no uncertainty rests on the reality of his Divine commission. His success was signal. Chief after chief, and clan after clan, were converted and baptized ; the yoke of Druidism was broken. When St. Patrick died in 493, several hundreds of churches and monasteries illuminated the formerly thick darkness of Irish paganism ; and in the next century the land was known as the " Island of Saints." It was no less the school of missionaries. Nobly the Irish Scots repaid their missionary debt to the country which ultimately received from them its name, when they sent forth, among other evangelists, Columba, the Apostle of Scotland (p. 64). But other lands shared the blessing. From Armagh, Bangor, Clonard, and Derry, numerous bands of missionary monks proceeded, crossed the seas in their fragile coracles, aided in the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons, and became the pioneers of Christianity in Central Europe (see p. 76).

<sup>1</sup> St. Patrick's B      home is generally identified with what is now "patrick, near Dumbarton, within the Roman province of Valentia, which had already, so far, been evangelised.

## CHAPTER IX

### ST. BENEDICT AND HIS MONASTIC RULE (529 A.D.) ; JUSTINIAN AND THE CHURCH OF ST. SOPHIA (532 A.D.)

DURING the first half of the sixth century, when the period of ancient Christianity was drawing to a close, two figures are prominent on the historical canvas: Benedict, by whom Western monasticism was prepared for its mission as one of the main forces of mediæval Christendom; and Justinian, under whom the declining Roman Empire, in great part through the genius of its generals, enjoyed a brief Indian summer of prosperity and triumph.

1. **Benedict's early life and settlement on Monte Casino.**—Midway between Rome and Naples, on a lofty hill among the Apennines, environed by snow-capped mountains, stands a colossal pile of monastic buildings, now used chiefly as an educational establishment; it occupies the site of the original monastery of Monte Casino, the mother-house of organised monasticism in the West. The founder, Benedict of Nursia, when a boy of fourteen, took refuge (494 A.D.) from vicious companionship in a cave near Subiaco, forty miles from Rome. He lived there for several years, his retreat being at first known only to a monk, Romanus, who saved from his own meals enough to supply Benedict's

need. By and by, however, the fame of the young hermit's sanctity drew to Subiaco alike refined youths of the Roman nobility whom their parents sent for religious training, and rough Gothic adventurers whose hearts had been turned from the pursuit of carnal spoil to the search for heavenly treasure. Twelve monasteries, with an abbot and twelve monks in each, grew up in the neighbourhood under Benedict's supervision. In 528 the malicious jealousy of the clergy drove the saint, along with many of his monks, for greater seclusion, to the hills where the Roman general, Fabius, more than seven centuries before, had wearied out Hannibal through astute avoidance of battle. On the summit of Monte Casino, where rustics still worshipped an image of Apollo, the brotherhood fixed their abode, destroyed the interdicted idol, and built on the site of the pagan altar a Christian sanctuary. There, in 529, the Rule was drawn up which became the standard of Western monastic life, and the great Benedictine Order was founded which was destined to become both a blessing and a bane to mankind.

**2. The Benedictine Rule.**—Hitherto, although monks and monasteries were numerous in the West, monastic life lacked stability and utility, unity of discipline and strength of organisation. These defects Benedict's Rule, and the authority which it attained, supplied. The Rule was based on a triple vow of (1) stedfastness, (2) obedience, (3) reformation. In accordance with the first, every brother became, after a year or more of probation, a monk for life; and thus a mode of living developed into an order of men. In virtue of the second, the abbot, chosen by the monks, aided by a prior, and advised by a court of deans, exercised supreme authority over all; and thus a brotherhood became an organised corporation. For the fulfilment of the third vow an elaborate

system of regulations was constructed. Private property must be renounced ; the monk was to call nothing his own. Food and fast were prescribed in detail ; excessive asceticism and needless self-indulgence were alike to be avoided. Flesh was forbidden except to invalids ; abstinence from wine was encouraged but not enforced. All were to wear a simple tunic with a black cowl in order to emphasise the fact that the monks were an order, as well as to prevent extravagance and singularity in dress. There was a complete diary of devotions and labours, which assigned to each hour its special occupation ; and thus what might have degenerated into a life of religious dreaminess and perilous leisure became a round of stated duties. Seven fixed hours of prayer, praise, and meditation secured regularity without excess of devotion ; seven statutory hours of work, manual or mental, not only prevented idleness, which Benedict called "the enemy of the soul," but transfigured the lowliest labour into spiritual discipline.

**3. Extension of Benedictine Order and Rule.**—Benedict had no intention of founding a world-wide order, or of imposing on monasticism a universal rule ; he sought only to regulate the lives of the brethren in his own monastery and its dependent houses. But the rule met a felt want : men were spiritual children, needing and seeking specific guidance ; Monte Casino became a general model ; and thus the order grew like a mighty forest out of the propagation of one strong tree in a congenial soil. In Benedict's lifetime the brotherhood spread from Italy to France and Spain. Within a century after his death in 543, apart from fresh erections, it had absorbed and assimilated the entire monasticism of the West, except that of the Celts in Britain and Ireland. During the first eight hundred years of its existence sixty members of the order were crowned as

monarchs, twenty-four enthroned as popes, many hundreds distinguished as missionaries, authors, and artists, many thousands consecrated as bishops or archbishops. In the fourteenth century, although numerous new orders had arisen, the Benedictine houses numbered 30,000.

**4. Mission of Monasticism.**—Monasticism had evil elements, which from the first were spiritually detrimental and eventually became morally ruinous. Its enforced celibacy was unnatural, and it was inevitable that nature should revolt. Withdrawal from domestic life involved loss of purifying influence; neglect of social fellowship and responsibilities entailed narrow-mindedness and selfishness; constant attention to minute regulations tended to turn men into religious machines. Nevertheless monasticism, under an over-ruling Providence, became for centuries a potent instrument of temporal progress and spiritual wellbeing. The development of agriculture, and reclamation of waste soil; the care of sick and poor, and protection of the weak in rough times when might was right; the chronicling of passing events, and the preservation of the literature of the past; the education of Christian youth, and the diffusion of the Gospel among the heathen barbarians—such was the varied mission in store for that great religious movement which was stimulated, moulded, and consolidated by the Rule of St. Benedict.<sup>1</sup>

**5. Policy of Justinian (527-565).**—The policy, long pursued, of enforcing, so far as practicable, religious uniformity, reached under this emperor its climax. The

<sup>1</sup> The introduction of literary culture into Western monastic life was due mainly to Benedict's contemporary, Cassiodorus, a patrician of Rome; the missionary impulse came to the Order chiefly from Gregory the Great (p. 63). Western monasticism avoided such extravagances as that of the Pillar-Saints in the East, who lived for years on the top of a column engaged in constant self-mortification and devotional observance. See Tennyson's "St. Simeon."

same year in which Benedict's Rule was established witnessed Justinian's intolerant suppression of the philosophical school of Athens, the last refuge of pagan culture. In a similar spirit he ordered all his subjects not only to profess Christianity but (what had never before been demanded) to be baptized, on pain of confiscation and exile. Paganism obtained on this occasion at least one martyr—Photius, a patrician, who committed suicide rather than submit. Justinian's zeal for religious uniformity led him to deal differently with heretics, and he commenced those imperial attempts (previously mentioned, p. 53) to conciliate the Monophysites, by means of enforced compromises, which occasioned more discord than they removed. A policy of interference by the State with the doctrine of the Church was thus developed, such as, in some cases, proved for the time advantageous, but ultimately reduced the Eastern Church to a position of degrading subserviency.

**6. The Church of St. Sophia.**—No edifice in Constantinople is so deeply interesting to Christians as the great mosque, which, in spite of internal transformation, is substantially the Church of St. Sophia re-erected by Justinian. It marks an epoch in church-building. It was not only the earliest notable specimen of a particular style of ecclesiastical edifice (the Byzantine): it inaugurated, by its sublime and ethereal dome, 179 feet high, the architectural expression of heavenward aspiration afterwards symbolised by the Gothic spire; and it was the pioneer, the inspirer, and for many centuries the most conspicuous example of a long series of architectural triumphs, in which the wealth, labour, and genius of successive generations were unsparingly devoted to the glorification of the House of God. Four centuries later, when Russian envoys visited Constantinople on a mission of religious inquiry (see p. 95), they reported to

their sovereign, Vladimir, that in the Church of St. Sophia they "knew not whether they were not in heaven." It is difficult to exclude from any earthly good an evil element, and profusion of outward magnificence in churches has helped, doubtless, to foster externalism in worship, when this had been otherwise engendered ; but the glories of ecclesiastical architecture have preached to mankind in impressive pictorial parables the "beauty of holiness," and have taught with silent emphasis the lesson which every nation and generation need to learn, that our best, and not our meanest, is to be devoted to God.

## CHAPTER X

### THE PONTIFICATE OF GREGORY THE GREAT (590-604 A.D.), INAUGURATION OF MEDIÆVAL CHRISTIANITY

MEDIÆVAL Church History may be conveniently divided into three main periods: (1) a period of growth, commencing with the accession of Pope Gregory the Great in 590 A.D.; (2) a period of bloom, inaugurated by the elevation of Gregory VII. (Hildebrand) in 1073; (3) a period of mingled decay and preparation (decay of mediæval, preparation for modern Christianity), extending from the pontificate of Boniface VIII. (1294-1303) to the Reformation.

The first period witnessed the growth of the Church through missionary enterprise in the North and West, compensating fully for its contraction, through Mahometan aggression, on the East and South; the growth of monasticism as the instrument of European civilisation and religious culture; the progress of the papacy as regards both temporal power and spiritual supremacy; the development of the Church's ritual, and exaltation of outward religious observance; the increase of superstition, through which piety was distorted and faith obscured. During this era Rome becomes conspicuously the centre of the Christian world, and the West the main theatre of ecclesiastical activity; Constantinople

recedes gradually into the background, and the Eastern Church, mutilated and comparatively stagnant, becomes of secondary significance. By the close of the period, estrangement of long standing between the Greek and Latin Churches has developed into formal schism.

In the personality and pontificate of Gregory I., we find an embodiment at once of the worthier and of the less worthy elements of mediæval Christianity.

**1. Gregory's encouragement of monasticism.**—Born about 540 A.D., of noble parentage, raised to the Prætorship of Rome in 570, Gregory came, in 575, under the influence of the Abbot of Monte Casino, relinquished all worldly pomp and secular aspirations, and became at once a Benedictine monk and a consecrated man. He devoted his wealth to the extension of the Order, and transformed his ancestral palace on the Cœlian Hill into a monastery, of which he was the first abbot. His elevation to the Papedom in 590 constituted the coronation of monasticism, and became the means of widening the sphere and deepening the influence of that organisation. Benedictine monks were made archbishops and papal legates. The Rule of St. Benedict was sanctioned by the authority at once of the Pope and of a Roman Council. Through decrees of councils monastic communities were protected against episcopal interference, monastic property from secular alienation. Under such fostering patronage Benedictine fraternities multiplied.

**2. Gregory's missionary zeal.**—Gregory gave to monasticism a missionary impulse whose successive effects can be traced through centuries of evangelistic activity. Prior to his pontificate, his heart had been stirred to missionary devotion by the sight of Anglo-Saxon pagan youths in the Roman slave market; he discerned in the fair-faced Angles those who might become angels; and

æ had actually set out on an expedition to Britain, when the Pope of the day, urged by the people, authoritatively recalled him to work at home. His evangelistic zeal was only restrained, not cooled ; and after he became Pope he carried out his long-cherished purpose through the equipment, in 597, of the famous Mission of Augustine, the first Archbishop of Canterbury. From the Anglo-Saxon Church, thus founded under Gregory's auspices, there emerged (among others) in the seventh century, Willebrord, the Evangelist of the Netherlands, and, in the eighth century, Boniface, the Apostle of Germany.

Contemporary with Gregory's Pontificate, but independent of Roman influence, were the missionary labours of St. Kentigern in the south-west of what is now Scotland, and those of two illustrious Irish Scots, St. Columba and St. Columbanus. Columba became the Apostle of the Northern Picts whom he evangelised from Iona, and the founder of the Scottish Church : Columbanus established at Luxeuil among the Vosges mountains a monastery which at first seemed likely to rival Monte Casino, and he became the leader of missionary enterprise in Burgundy and Switzerland.

Monks from Iona fully shared with the followers of Augustine the glory of Christianising the Anglo-Saxons of Britain. The Holy Isle of Lindisfarne, where, on the invitation of Oswald, king of Northumbria, the Scottish mission was founded by St. Aidan in 634, became the base of successful missionary operations extending from the Forth to the Thames. Ere long the Celtic and Roman Churches came into conflict, nominally in regard to the proper mode of reckoning the date of Easter, but really on the deeper question of conformity to or independence of Rome. A decision adverse to the Celtic view, at a Northumbrian Council held in 664 at Whitby, issued in

the retirement of the Scots from the field ; while the Mission founded under Gregory's influence developed into the Church of England, and eventually (in the eighth century) absorbed the older British Church which Augustine's overbearing attitude had originally repelled.

**3. Gregory's promotion of papal power.**—Gregory is regarded as the Father of the mediæval papacy,<sup>1</sup> which, amid many evils attending its development, was providentially ordained to accomplish, during centuries of political and social upheaval and confusion, the consolidation of European Christianity. (1) Gregory found the spiritual supremacy of the Roman See already widely acknowledged in the West. He extended and confirmed this ecclesiastical allegiance through missionary enterprise, the conversion of Arian Lombards to the Catholic Faith, and the appointment of papal legates, who became counsellors of princes and bishops in various lands, and kept Rome in touch with the different provinces of Christendom. (2) Gregory alike withstood the claim of the Patriarch of Constantinople to the title of Universal Bishop, and renounced such a designation for himself, thus condemning by anticipation a later papal pretension ; yet none the less he paved the way for it, by claiming for the Roman See not only a precedence over all other bishoprics, but the position of a Court of final appeal for the Universal Church. (3) During his pontificate, the temporal power of the papacy was notably magnified. The imperial government in the West was weak, and was administered, as we have seen, at Ravenna. When the Lombards ravaged Italy and threatened Rome, the imperial vicegerent was helpless ; and on Gregory devolved the task of negotiating with the invaders. His success in concluding an advantageous peace, along with his

<sup>1</sup> Innocent I. and Leo I., however, had prepared the way for it (p. 43).

munificent relief of destitution caused by the presence of the Lombards, gave to the papacy the prestige of virtual sovereignty.

**4. Gregory's influence on the Church's ritual.**—Prior to Gregory's time, great diversity of ritual existed in Western Christendom. Apart from local variations, an entire family of liturgies—the Gallican—diverged widely from the Roman form of worship, and even after Gregory's day various orders of service continued to be used. To this Pope's careful revision, however, was due the production of a liturgy which, partly through intrinsic excellence, partly through the compiler's personal and papal authority (supported at a later stage by the influence of Charlemagne), gradually came into almost universal use throughout Western Christendom. Gregory devoted special attention also to the Service of Praise. His collection of sacred chants was usually adopted along with his liturgy; and not a few hymns of his own composition met with widespread acceptance. One of these—a Hymn on the Passion—was described by Luther as the best ever written. Gregory, moreover, instituted, endowed, and personally superintended a Song School for the improvement of Psalmody, and set the example of choosing choristers from the lower ranks of the clergy, with a view to greater reverence in congregational praise. He introduced the kind of chant called by his name and distinguished from the earlier Ambrosian as more solemn and ecclesiastical, if less melodious and popular. While Gregory thus led the way in the development of the Church's ritual, he had no direct share in that subordination of the element of instruction which is characteristic of mediæval worship. He was an assiduous as well as effective preacher; and his pulpit power is significantly attested by the fancy of auditors (often pictorially represented) that they saw the Holy Spirit, in the form

of a white dove, whispering the words into the preacher's ear.

5. Gregory's share in the growth of mediæval superstition.—(1) Gregory is the earliest theologian who states definitely the doctrine of Purgatory, already vaguely set forth by Origen and Augustine, and who approves distinctly of masses for the relief of departed souls. He quotes as Scriptural authority Matt. xii. 32, and fortifies dogma and practice with marvellous stories of purgatorial sufferers, who had appeared to friends and had entreated that the sacrifice of the mass might be offered on their behalf. (2) While not actually enunciating, he paves the way for the doctrine of transubstantiation, when he writes of the "sacramental oblation being made the body of Christ," of "His Blood being poured into the mouth of the faithful," and of "Heaven opening at the voice of the priest in the very hour of sacrifice." Such language used before the era of transubstantiation controversy may be only strongly figurative; but in later times, when the doctrine was formally promulgated, Gregory was believed to have held it, and so became the means of its propagation through the authority of his great name. A favourite altar-picture in Roman churches represents him celebrating mass, and blood-streaks appearing in the consecrated bread in token of actual transubstantiation. (3) To Gregory's influence must be ascribed in considerable degree the superstitious veneration of relics which characterised mediæval Christianity. Not that he began the practice, which can be traced to the second century; but he went beyond all influential ecclesiastics who preceded him, as regards the importance of relics and the reverence due to them. He ordered bones of saints to be deposited in all newly-founded churches, and sent to distinguished converts presents of keys into which were wrought filings from what were

believed to be St. Peter's chains. He believed in the potency even of clothing which had been put in contact with relics, and credulously relates how the efficacy of a cloth had been proved through the blood which flowed when it was cut.

6. **Gregory's personality** was not perfect, any more than his influence was entirely wholesome. In his negotiations with potentates in Church and State he was not incapable of that craft and occasional insincerity which are the besetting faults alike of political and of ecclesiastical diplomacy. Taken as a whole, however, his character was noble and worthy. His ambition was unselfish, his patriotism ardent, his philanthropy disinterested. His piety was none the less genuine because it was monastic and ascetic. He set before the clergy a high standard of pastoral duty; before the monks lofty aspirations after missionary enterprise. He served his Church and his God with conscientious self-denial and unflagging zeal. He rises above all his contemporaries, and is not unworthy of the designation given to him by posterity of **Gregory the Great**.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE "FLIGHT" OF MAHOMET (622 A.D.); ISLAM AS THE RIVAL OF CHRISTIANITY

WHILE Gregory the Great inaugurated mediæval Christianity in the West, the man was growing up to maturity who was destined to inflict on Eastern Christendom its most signal loss, causing the Greek Church to enter on its mediæval history mutilated or supplanted, in many territories, by a younger and more vigorous rival organisation.

1. Eastern Christendom at this juncture was in a degenerate condition, the natural result of the imperial policy of constrained conversion, with the consequent entrance into the Church of multitudes who brought their paganism along with them. The Church had become degenerate in its relations with the empire, exhibiting for the most part an unworthy subservience; degenerate in its attitude towards heathendom, manifesting, except in the case of the heretical Nestorians, a culpable missionary negligence; degenerate in its theological activity, wasting intellectual strength on profitless subtleties; degenerate in its ritual, admitting Mariolatry, saint-worship, and image-worship; degenerate finally in its religious life—a life at once embittered by theological controversies (even the common people

taking factious part), and secularised by the leaven of a time-serving membership, whose Christian profession was the outcome of worldly prudence or fear of penalty. The candle of the Lord burned with a dim and impure flame ; and the sentence went forth, regarding a large portion of Eastern Christendom, that the candlestick should be removed.

**2. Rise and progress of Mahometanism.**—Mahomet (more strictly, Mohammed) was born at Mecca in 570. He received his first “revelation” and what he believed to be his prophetic call in 610. For about three years he confined himself to the private communication of his mission ; he then publicly proclaimed himself a prophet of the One God, attacked the idolatry of his native city, and, while disclaiming miraculous power in the ordinary sense, gave forth what became portions of the Koran as the embodiments of successive supernatural communications. When the opposition of his fellow-citizens deepened into persecution, he fled in 622 to Medina, where his prophetic authority was recognised, and an army of enthusiastic followers enabled him to inaugurate his career of conversion and conquest. From this unpromising Flight (the “Hegira”), thus transformed into a successful Exodus, the Moslem era is dated. By the time of the Prophet’s death in 633, all Arabia had accepted the Koran and submitted to Mahometan rule. By the middle of the century Syria and Palestine, Egypt and Persia, had succumbed ; before its close the apostasy of North Africa had followed, and the successors of Mahomet ruled over an empire as large as that of the successors of Constantine.

**3. General estimate of Mahomet and Islam.**—The old notion that Mahomet was a simple impostor and Islam unmitigated error, has in modern times been discarded ; and it is now generally recognised (1) that

Mahomet was a man of earnest and (originally at least) elevated character, but that in the later portion of his career prosperity developed in him seeds of sensuality and selfish ambition ; (2) that he was sincere, on the whole, in his religious profession and missionary enterprise, although enthusiasm in his case led to frequent self-delusion, and the constraint of circumstances betrayed him into occasional fabrication ; (3) that his religious system, compounded largely of Parsee, Jewish, and Christian materials,<sup>1</sup> was in several particulars superior not only to the paganism but to some forms of the paganised Christianity which it displaced, although it was also fatally defective, even in theory, as a satisfying religion for mankind ; (4) that in the history of the world, Mahometanism has exercised, to a considerable extent, a salutary influence, partly as the scourge of and witness against a corrupt Church, partly as the instrument of a provisional civilisation and the preparation for a better faith. This is not less true because it has also figured largely as a hindrance to higher civilisation, and as the opponent of Christian missionary enterprise.

4. The moral strength of Mahometanism, compared with the degenerate Christianity which it widely supplanted, lay—

(1) In its realisation, however roughly and distortedly, of that missionary responsibility of true religion, to which orthodox Eastern Christendom had become virtually insensible. So far, Islam entered into the religious heritage of a self-disinherited church.

(2) In its recall of the attention of mankind from abstruse controversies, degenerating often into strife

<sup>1</sup> Tradition represented Mahomet as the intimate friend of a Nestorian monk ; and his account of Christ in the Koran shows acquaintance with the contents of apocryphal gospels.

about words, to first principles of religious faith and duty,

"Strong these contending mysteries to displace  
By one plain ancient creed."

While the Church wearied the minds and dulled the consciences of her membership by magnifying the importance of such questions as, whether there were in the exercise of His will by our Lord a single or a twofold operation, Mahometanism emphasised the great religious truths of God, judgment, immortality, and the great moral duties of self-denial, sobriety, regular devotion, and submission<sup>1</sup> to the divine will.

(3) In its anticipations, so far, of Protestant doctrine.  
(a) It offered emphatic antagonism to idolatry, against which the testimony of the Christian Church had become enfeebled and obscured through Mariolatry, saint-worship, and veneration of relics and images. "There is no god but God" not only was the cardinal article of the Moslem creed, but was consistently embodied in Moslem ritual.  
(b) It rejected such false and mere human mediation between man and God as the Church had for generations been creating at once in the form of sacerdotal pretension and in that of saintly interposition. Islam, at least in its earlier stages, like primitive Christianity, invited man direct into the divine presence, to offer prayer and to receive blessing, without the need of any intervention either by earthly priest or by heavenly saint.

5. The moral weakness of Mahometanism as the rival of Christianity.—(1) As regards missionary extension that weakness lay not merely in the fact of its propagation by constraint<sup>2</sup> (in this respect Mahometan

<sup>1</sup> The word Islam means submission.

<sup>2</sup> Idolaters were offered Koran or death ; Christians and Jews had, as a rule, the alternative of political bondage and tribute, with partial toleration.

procedure was only one degree more intolerant than that of the Christian Empire), but much more in the prostitution, during Mahomet's later years and in still greater degree under his successors, of religious zeal to secular conquest. Mahometanism thus became secularised, like the papacy in a later age, through grasping at temporal sovereignty in the name of religion.

(2) As regards positive doctrine, while Islam emphasised vital truths, as distinguished from abstruse and unpractical dogmas, it failed to interpret those verities truly. God is represented not as a Heavenly Father, but as a Despot to whom is rendered not the trustful obedience of children but the constrained submission of bondmen. The doctrines of future judgment and immortality are degraded by the picture of a sensuous Paradise won by external service. Self-denial, as expounded by Mahometanism, becomes mainly outward abstinence; while its degrading theory of woman's essential inferiority, its debasing facility of divorce, and its retrograde sanction of polygamy and concubinage, even under restrictions which at the time were comparatively reformations, stand in signal contrast to Christian teaching, and have tended to make the Moslem woman not the purifying helpmeet but "the drudge or the plaything"<sup>1</sup> of man.

(3) Its Protestant testimony was negative and therefore fatally defective and impotent. (a) Abjuring idolatry, Islam substituted nothing to meet that deep human craving after visible Deity which pagan idolatry improperly gratifies, and which in the Holy Incarnation alone is fully and legitimately satisfied. Christ is honoured as the greatest prophet next to Mahomet, but

<sup>1</sup> See Principal Stewart's Text-book on *Christian Evidences*, chap. x. Mahometanism is more fully treated in Principal Grant's Text-book on the *Religions of the World*.

His designation as Incarnate Son of God is regarded as monstrous blasphemy. (b) Rejecting the false mediation of sacerdotalism and saintly intervention, Islam ignored the need of a Mediator altogether. Recognising no deep sense of guilt, it found no place for the true mediation, expiatory and intercessory, of a divine-human High Priest. Thus while it swept away some obscuring clouds between man and his Maker, it failed positively to bring God near to mankind.

(4) Above all, Mahometanism, as compared with Christianity, failed to supply the world with an ideal life actually realised. Not the inferiority, immeasurably great though it be, of Koran to Bible as a moral and religious directory, has been so fatal to Mahometan spiritual attainment and elevation, as the fact that neither in Mahomet himself nor in any of his followers could Islam exhibit to men a perfect pattern. Christianity presents to mankind not only a Holy Book of divine origin, free from such blemishes as disfigure the Koran, but a Living, Incarnate Word of God, whose perfect life becomes, through the operations of the Divine Spirit, amid recurrent Christian degeneracy, "an enduring principle of regeneration."

## CHAPTER XII

### ARREST OF MAHOMETANISM AT TOURS, AND CULMINATION OF BONIFACE'S MISSIONARY CAREER (732 A.D.)

I. ARREST OF ISLAM IN THE WEST.—The battle near Tours in 732 A.D. ranks as one of “Fifteen decisive battles of the world.” It decided whether the Teuton or the Saracen was to succeed the Roman as the dominating power of Europe. “But for the victory at Tours,” writes Gibbon, “perhaps the interpretation of the Koran would now be taught in the schools of Oxford, and her pulpits might demonstrate to a circumcised people the sanctity and truth of the revelation of Mahomet.”

Early in the eighth century Islam had spread from North Africa to Spain; and by 711 A.D. Saracen rule had been extended over the whole peninsula, except a mountainous province in the north-west. A few years later the victorious Moslems had crossed the Pyrenees, overrun the south of France, captured Bordeaux, and penetrated to the Loire; while simultaneously (717 A.D.) their Eastern co-religionists had appeared at the gates of Constantinople. It seemed as if the Frankish Church and even entire Christendom were about to be submerged under the tide of Moslem invasion, when at Tours, under Charles Martel (*i.e.* the Hammer), Saracen progress was decisively arrested. Spain, indeed, was destined for

centuries to bear the Mahometan yoke ; Italy was yet to be threatened and even for a time partially occupied ; Constantinople was doomed seven centuries later to fall ; but on the field of Tours, Europe, as a whole, was saved.

**II. BONIFACE THE APOSTLE OF GERMANY.**—While the greatest general of his age was defending and delivering Christianity from Islam west of the Rhine, the greatest missionary of his time was extending Christianity east of that river among the pagans of Germany, and in the very year of Charles Martel's victory he received from the Pope the archiepiscopal pall which marked the culmination of his career.

**1. Early life ; missionary predecessors.**—Boniface (originally Bonifatius, of prosperous fate, the Latin form of his Saxon name Winfried, but afterwards transformed into Bonifacius, benefactor) was an Anglo-Saxon monk, born in 680 at Crediton, in Devonshire. In early manhood he was inspired with the holy ambition to Christianise the lands from which his pagan ancestors had emigrated, and in 715 he set out on his first missionary enterprise. Germany was not then wholly heathen. Bishops of Cologne and Treves had come to a council at Arles in 314. Severinus in the fifth century, from his cell at Passau on the Danube, had evangelised what is now Bavaria, although the tide of Teutonic migration had in great part obliterated the traces of his labours. More recently, in the seventh century, disciples of Columbanus, the Irish-Scot, had established monastic and missionary settlements in Franconia, Swabia, and other parts of Southern Germany ; but the efforts of these Celtic pioneers were sporadic, and their success was limited. Among the Teutons they were aliens in race and speech ; in Continental Christendom they were aliens in ecclesiastical constitution, usage, and sympathies. They recognised neither papal supremacy nor episcopal

jurisdiction ; and in defiance of the rule, "In things indifferent do at Rome as Rome does," they observed, like their fellow-Celts in Northumbria and elsewhere, an obsolete Easter-date and other non-Roman ecclesiastical customs. They had thus missed support which they would otherwise have received from the Roman See and Continental Churches, when they pushed forward Christian enterprise into the heart of heathendom ; and, while acting apart from Roman organisation, they had none of their own adequate to take its place. Accordingly, as in England during the seventh century, so in Germany during the eighth, the Celtic Mission was superseded by the Saxon. The earliest Anglo-Saxon missionary to the pagan Teutons on the Continent was Wilfrid of York, the leader of the Romanising movement in Northumbria. He began in 678 the evangelisation of what was then called Frisia and is now Holland. Eleven years later, Willebrord, a monk from Wilfrid's monastery at Ripon, resumed the interrupted enterprise and became first Archbishop of Utrecht.

**2. Boniface as an evangelist.**—It was to assist Willebrord that Boniface first set forth as a missionary in 715. The time, however, was inopportune : a war between the pagan Frisians and the aggressive Christian Franks had prejudiced the former against the latter's faith. Boniface, after receiving the papal benediction at Rome and taking a vow of fidelity to the Pope, set out for Thuringia, where, under the protection of Charles Martel's conquering army, he preached the Gospel to vanquished pagans, and founded his first missionary monastery on the banks of the Ohm. On St. Andrew's Day, 723, he was raised by Gregory II. to the status of missionary Bishop of the Teutons. Soon afterwards the memorable event took place from which the success of his mission is dated. His labours had long been

undermined by the superstitious reverence of the people for an ancient oak at Geismar (in Hesse), sacred to Thor the Thunder-god. It was the chief object of popular worship and under its boughs was the place of national tryst. Boniface boldly resolved to remove this stumbling-block. Accompanied by his clergy he came with axe in hand to fell the oak. The scene on Carmel was substantially re-enacted. Thousands assembled to witness the conflict between the old faith and the new, the majority confident that Thor would smite down the impious assailant and protect against outrage the object of their own and their forefathers' veneration. After a few blows from the axe, a crash was heard in the upmost branches; a tempest shook the tree; and, as the result perhaps of a stroke of lightning, the great oak was split in pieces. It was the turning-point in Boniface's missionary career. His success, hitherto moderate, became now signal. Out of the wood of the oak a church was built; other churches speedily superseded heathen sanctuaries; monasteries were founded at Fritzlar, Erfurt, Homburg, and elsewhere. Tidings of the movement and appeals for aid brought fresh bands of missionary monks from England. Civilisation was combined with evangelisation: forest tracts were cleared and cultivated by Christian labour. A papal letter belonging to this period indicates 100,000 converts; and, when continued success necessitated increased organisation, Boniface was raised in 732 by Gregory III. to the dignity of **missionary Metropolitan**, with power to appoint and supervise bishops throughout the entire territory evangelised. The scene of Boniface's personal labour now shifts to southern Germany, in the regions which at present constitute Baden, Bavaria, and part of western Austria. During this later period the chief centre of missionary activity was Mayence, which in 743 became Boniface's archi-

episcopal seat. Thence he exercised ecclesiastical jurisdiction, as well as promoted evangelistic enterprise, from Strasburg to Salzburg and from Cologne to Chur.

**3. Boniface as organiser and Romaniser.**—Boniface was great not only in evangelising but also in organising. Under his auspices, with the co-operation of Carloman, son of Charles Martel, numerous bishoprics were constituted—among others those of Erfurt and Würzburg in central Germany, of Ratisbon, Passau, and Salzburg in the south-east; while the great mother-monastery founded by him in 744 at Fulda became under its first Abbot, Sturm, the Monte Casino of Germany, within whose walls and those of daughter-houses 4000 monks were engaged in works of civilisation and education, or were prepared for missionary labour.

Boniface not only organised but Romanised. At his second visit to Rome, in 723, he took a solemn vow not only himself to continue in the Catholic faith, in communion with Rome, and in adherence to Roman usage, but to renounce all fellowship with those who acted otherwise, and to hinder their work to the best of his power. In accordance with this vow, he ignored or withheld alike Celtic missionaries and Frankish clergy who refused submission to Rome; he supplanted them as ecclesiastical rebels, and those who were married he denounced as adulterers. From the Protestant standpoint this intolerance is the vulnerable part of Boniface's missionary policy. It is urged in his defence that, among the populations with which he had to deal, Christianity could perhaps make progress only when upheld by a disciplined ecclesiastical army in which no independent action gave the appearance of disunion. A well-organised Roman uniformity was doubtless more effective than an undisciplined anti-papal independency. Boniface's loyalty to Rome, however, was far from servile: it was quite com-

patible with frank and fearless protest against Romish abuse. He rebuked Pope Zacharias (741-52) for virtual sale of ecclesiastical dignities and for practical sanction of superstitious and semi-pagan celebrations.

**4. Death of Boniface.**—In 754, when he was seventy four years old, Boniface resigned his archbishopric into younger hands, and closed his career with a missionary expedition to the scene of his earliest labours—Frisia. The encouragement he received provoked pagan fanaticism, while the gold and silver plate supposed to be in his possession excited barbarian greed. Surprised by a band of heathen assailants, he restrained his followers from vain resistance, laid his head on a volume of the Gospels, and in this attitude received the murderous blow which invested him with the martyr's crown. The conversion of the Teutons was far from being completed under Boniface and his disciples; but he laid the foundation of Teutonic Christendom deep enough, and raised the edifice high enough, to bear with propriety the designation of the *Apostle of Germany*.

## CHAPTER XIII

### CORONATION OF CHARLEMAGNE (800 A.D.), AND HIS PLACE IN MEDIÆVAL CHURCH HISTORY

ON Christmas Day, 800 A.D., the ancient Basilica of St. Peter at Rome was the scene of a memorable celebration. It was filled with a crowd of worshippers, including a large array of clergy, soldiers, and leading Frankish and Italian nobility. At the close of the service—which was performed by Pope Leo III.—a man of lofty stature, soldierly mien, and Teutonic features, clad in the long robe of a Roman patrician, prostrated himself before the altar. As he was about to rise, Leo advanced from his throne bearing in his hands a crown, which he placed on the kneeling worshipper's head, and proclaimed him, amid universal acclamation, Charles Augustus, Emperor of the Romans. It was the coronation of Charlemagne, King of the Franks, and the inauguration of what in the tenth century began to be called the **Holy Roman Empire**. This coronation by the Pope was no empty ceremonial but the recognition of already existing fact. By the close of the eighth century, Charlemagne had established his sway from the Ebro to the Vistula, from the German Ocean to the centre of Italy. Before the same date the Popes had gradually emancipated themselves from that allegiance to the old Roman Empire

which since Gregory I.'s time had been little more than nominal, and they had established an alliance for mutual advantage with the Frankish rulers. The ceremonial in 800 A.D. was the outward token of the already accomplished substitution of Teutonic Kaiser for Roman Cæsar.

Charlemagne (742-814), in spite of grave moral aberrations, towers above his contemporaries as the hero of his age. In him fresh Teutonic energy and prowess were blended with old Roman stability and appreciation of culture. A great conqueror and ruler, he was equally illustrious in the spheres of civilisation and religious enterprise. Architecture, agriculture, manufactures, commerce, all received under his reign a potent stimulus; his palace-school and the galaxy of cultured men who adorned his court were the germs of the future university; and with the help of Alcuin of England, the most learned man of his time, an imperial system of education was organised. The winner of an empire with the sword, and the recipient of a crown from the Church, Charlemagne united imperial ambition with ecclesiastical consecration, the consolidation of diverse races with the propagation, defence, and support of Christianity.

1. **Charlemagne as extender and defender of Christendom.**—(1) He was a missionary on a large scale, although on a wrong method. He endeavoured to follow up at once the work of his grandfather Martel and that of St. Boniface—to accomplish simultaneously the extension of his Empire and the propagation of his Faith. His method of conversion resembled that of Islam: he offered (against Alcuin's remonstrance) the alternative of baptism or the sword. By this rough means a commencement was made with the nominal conversion of the Slavs; but the crusade was mainly directed against the pagan Saxons. Enforced baptism was followed by religious

education and spiritual oversight. Apostolic practice was to teach and baptize ; Charlemagne's was to baptize and teach. Wherever his conquests extended, churches, schools, and monasteries were erected, bishoprics were established and endowed ; so that even when the first generation remained heathen at heart while Christian in name, the offspring of Christians by compulsion often became believers by conviction. The conversion of the Scandinavians was an object which Charlemagne's foresight discerned to be necessary for the safety of his Empire ; and a mediæval chronicle tells how one day, descrying a number of Danish vessels sailing into Narbonne, he pathetically forecast the ravages which those Northern adventurers, unrestrained either by Christianity or by civilisation, were destined to inflict upon Europe. But advancing years prevented him from undertaking a fresh task of missionary conquest ; to his son and successor, Louis the Pious, belongs the credit of inaugurating Scandinavian evangelisation. (2) Charlemagne called himself, not without reason, the Defender of the Church. To his policy the protection of Western Christendom against both pagan and Mahometan aggression was directly or indirectly due. The Norsemen pressing southward, and the Huns advancing westward might have submerged Europe under a wave of heathenism, had not their progress been arrested by the establishment of a potent Christian Empire, which even in weaker hands and in divided condition presented effective resistance. The same cause prevented the Saracens from re-invading France, and minimised their success in Italy during the ninth century, when Sicily succumbed to the Moslem yoke.

**2. Influence of Charlemagne on the Church's internal development.**—(1) Systematic provision was made by him for the support and education of the clergy. The

payment of tithes, originally voluntary, in the sixth century ecclesiastically enjoined, was now legally enforced. He issued decrees dealing with the training and examination of candidates for ordination, addressed epistles to the bishops ordering conformity to those decrees, and encouraged clerical learning by the foundation and enrichment of libraries. (2) Indirectly he promoted the severance of Western from Eastern Christendom. With the establishment of the new Roman Empire, dependence of the Roman Church on the old Empire ceased: the political link between the Eastern and Western Churches was broken; and thus one main influence, preservative of ecclesiastical unity even amid mutual jealousy, was removed. (3) The policy of Charlemagne led to the growth of papal power and prestige. His father, Pepin, had purchased an alliance with the papacy by enlarging the Pope's domain and so strengthening his secular power. Charlemagne continued Pepin's policy on a larger scale. He secured papal recognition and support by further additions to papal territory and by constituting the popedom a temporal sovereignty, subject to the Emperor's suzerainty alone. He also magnified and fortified the Pope's spiritual supremacy, by securing for Rome the allegiance of new churches in freshly-conquered regions, and by a general support of Roman ecclesiastical authority, especially in matters of ritual, throughout his dominions. Undesignedly, moreover, through acceptance of the imperial title from papal hands, he allowed a foundation to be laid on which was reared the later papal claim to bestow and to take away kingdoms and crowns. (4) Charlemagne, however, while thus fortifying the papacy both in the temporal and in the spiritual sphere, also laid the foundations of ultimate anti-papal revolt. A general council at Frankfort in 786 opposed, under his auspices,

in the iconoclastic controversy, both Rome and Constantinople. Still more important, in this regard, was the Emperor's determined conservation of the lay element in Church government. The Frankish Council was composed not like most other synods of bishops only, with presbyters and deacons as assessors, but also of counts and barons. The imperial commissioners, moreover, who inspected and regulated ecclesiastical matters, were chosen from both laity and clergy; one-third of the imperial legislation dealt with ecclesiastical affairs; and the Emperor represented himself as "the bishops' Bishop." Charlemagne's view of the relation between Church and State was almost as theocratic as that of the papacy: only, the supreme head of the theocracy he held to be not the Pope but the Emperor. To the Pope he was ready to give ample temporal power as well as spiritual; but for himself he claimed supreme authority, both spiritual and temporal. The Pope might be the Aaron, but the Emperor was the Moses of the theocracy. Charlemagne's influence was in fact only accidentally exercised in favour of papal pretension; and in as far as he emphasised the lay claim of prince and baron to a share in the regulation of ecclesiastical affairs, in so far, even while he strengthened the papacy, he was fostering one of the forces through which papal power, in half of Christendom, was eventually overthrown.

**3. Empire and Papacy after Charlemagne's Death.**—The integrity of the new Roman Empire did not long survive its founder, and the death of his son Louis was followed by formal dismemberment in 843. The imperial title remained, and in the tenth century, under Otho the Great, was permanently associated with Germany. As in the formation of the Empire, so by its disintegration, papal power was augmented. The overshadowing influence of a vast secular dominion was

removed, while internal feuds of the Frankish princes enabled Popes to pose as arbiters or to purchase concessions with partisanship. In the secular sphere, papal coronation, introduced in 858 on the accession of Nicholas I. (the greatest Pope between Gregory I. and Hildebrand), constituted the formal assumption of an already actual sovereignty. In the spiritual domain, the Pope's authority was enhanced through the effectual annulment in 862 of a cruel royal divorce<sup>1</sup> previously endorsed by archbishops and councils, as well as through the establishment in 865 of the right of appeal to Rome by any bishop against his ecclesiastical superior. Under Nicholas, also, papal pretensions received apparent historical confirmation from forged documents carelessly accepted as genuine till the fifteenth century. The forgeries included an alleged Donation of "all Italy or the West," by Constantine to the papacy, and fictitious letters from and to early "Popes" from the first century downwards. By these letters the stamp of primitive authorisation was conferred on the claim of the clergy to exemption from secular tribunals, and of the Pope to universal spiritual supremacy.

<sup>1</sup> That of Queen Theutberga by her immoral husband Lothair II., King of Lorraine.

## CHAPTER XIV

### IMAGE-WORSHIP AND TRANSUBSTANTIATION: A STAGE IN THE GROWTH OF SUPERSTITION (842-844 A.D.)

**I. CLOSE OF IMAGE-WORSHIP CONFLICT.**—Under the name “Sunday of Orthodoxy,” the first Lord’s Day in Lent is observed in the Eastern Church as a Festival, in commemoration of the Church’s triumph over all heresy. Each General Council is dramatically represented, and all heretics are anathematised. The original Sunday of Orthodoxy was in February 842, when a long controversy regarding images in worship was closed with the final re-introduction of sacred pictures<sup>1</sup> into the churches of Constantinople. This original significance of the Festival is still recognised by the solemn salutation of the pictures, on that day, by the clergy.

**1. Rise and growth of image-veneration.**—During the ante-Nicene period the Church was prevented, partly by poverty, still more by fear of idolatry, from encouraging images in places of worship.<sup>2</sup> After Christianity became the imperial religion, when Christian wealth led to church adornment, and the influence of

<sup>1</sup> In the Eastern Church “images” consisted (and still consist) only of pictorial representations.

<sup>2</sup> The representation of Christ as a Shepherd in the Roman Catacombs is scarcely an exception; for these subterranean Christian burial-places were not ordinary places of worship, and the Shepherd was a symbol not an image.

pagan usages on Christendom increased, representations of Christ and of saints began to appear in churches. In the fifth century the use of pictures was stimulated by the discovery of professed likenesses of Christ. Abuse speedily followed use. Augustine admits that many Christians adored images; Gregory the Great corresponded with a bishop who had destroyed the images in his church because they were worshipped; and the prevalence of such abuse in the East during the seventh century gave moral momentum, as we have seen, to Mahomet's iconoclastic zeal. In answer to protests founded on the Second Commandment, it was pleaded that the worship accorded to the image differed in kind from that rendered to God. It was held, also, that the reverence paid to the representation passed through it to the being represented. In practice, however, such distinctions were widely ignored and often not understood. Candles and incense were burned before pictures; newly-baptized infants were brought to them for sponsorship; scrapings from representations of our Lord were mixed with the sacramental elements; and miraculous cures were ascribed to images and to their adoration.

**2. The iconoclastic movement under Leo the Isaurian (717-741).**—Leo, as a man of earnest character, was scandalised by the growing abuse; while, as a patriotic emperor, he deplored a usage which, by stimulating Moslem aggression, had contributed not only to the contraction of Christendom but to the mutilation of the Empire. In 726 an imperial edict ordered all sacred pictures to be placed beyond reach of the worshipper; in 730 their destruction or removal was decreed; and the Emperor set an example by withdrawing from his palace-gate a portrait of Christ which had become an object of superstitious veneration. The iconoclastic movement was supported by the army, but disliked by the majority

of the people, as well as by a large portion of the clergy, and it met with keen opposition from the monks. Germanus, Patriarch of Constantinople, refused compliance; John of Damascus, the ablest Greek writer of the time, defended image-veneration. The monks of the Archipelago raised an insurrection, and the mob of Constantinople killed the officers who removed the venerated picture from the imperial gate. Leo, however, persevered. He deprived Germanus of the patriarchate and appointed Anastasius, an iconoclast; the rebellion was quelled and its leaders executed; the iconoclastic decrees were enforced, effectually on the whole, in the Eastern Empire. In Italy, where the imperial government was a shadow, the edicts, through papal influence, were successfully withstood.

**3. Subsequent history of the conflict in the East.**— Leo's policy, continued by his son Constantine V., received in 754 the sanction of a synod which assembled at Constantinople and was attended by 330 Eastern bishops. Fortified by this ecclesiastical authority, the Emperor proceeded to persecute recusants. The secular clergy were mostly submissive, but many monks resisted, and suffered banishment, torture, mutilation, or death. Under the Empress Irene the imperial policy was reversed. A General Council (the seventh) convened at Nicæa in 787, and attended by Roman delegates, annulled the synodical decrees of 754, and declared that images were entitled to a lower form of adoration. This reaction terminated in 802 with the expulsion of Irene, who had become obnoxious through cruelty and vice. Iconoclastic persecution was resumed under Leo the Armenian and two imperial successors (813-842). In 842, under the Empress Theodora, court influence was again enlisted strongly in favour of images; the Patriarch of Constantinople, John the Grammarian, an uncompromising

iconoclast, was scourged and banished ; and on the Sunday of Orthodoxy the conflict closed with the final triumph of superstitious worship.

4. **The controversy in the West.**—There, iconoclastic views had few strong sympathisers. Two leading ecclesiastics, however, Agobard, Archbishop of Lyons, and Claudius, Bishop of Turin, opposed, with greater consistency than the Eastern iconoclasts, not only the use of images but all worship of saints. Among the Franks in the eighth century a middle view prevailed between superstitious abuse and puritanic disuse. It was held (in substantial agreement with Gregory the Great) that images in churches were lawful as means of instruction and aids to devotion, though not as objects of worship. The chief supporters of this moderate doctrine were Charlemagne and Alcuin, through whose influence it was endorsed by the Council of Frankfort in 786. From the outset of the controversy, however, Italy, led by successive popes, favoured image-worship ; and before the close of the ninth century, through extension of papal influence, and gradual lapse from rational use into superstitious abuse, the adoration of images prevailed throughout Western no less than Eastern Christendom. Thenceforth the controversy slumbered until the dawn of the Reformation, when the conflict was renewed, and the three parties reappeared. The image-venerators were represented by the Roman Church. The iconoclasts revived in radical reformers, like Calvin and Knox, who regarded the association of images and pictures with superstition as of too long standing to be dissolved. The middle view was upheld by more conservative reformers like Luther, who denounced superstitious abuse, but pleaded, “As there is no sin in making an image of Christ in the mind, why should it be sinful to have it before our eyes?”

**5. Review of iconoclastic movement in Eastern Church.**—We must condemn the policy of persecution, as well as the failure to discriminate between inexpedient use and idolatrous abuse. The reform also was both inconsistent and negative. The protest against image-worship was accompanied by toleration of Mariolatry and saint-worship ; and no adequate means were taken, as at the Reformation, to substitute for pictures more spiritual aids to devotion. This defect mainly doomed the iconoclastic movement to failure ; the vacant house was left unoccupied, and the old tenants returned. On the other hand, our sympathy so far is due to the anti-idolatrous zeal of those who saw no practical means of preventing abuse except through total disuse. The virtual idolatry which prevailed in Christendom from the ninth century onwards is the best apology for a view inherently extreme, and warns us of the peril of providing the eye of the soul with an excess of optical aid, which, while appearing to bring divine objects nearer the vision, may really obscure the view.

**II. COMMENCEMENT OF TRANSUBSTANTIATION CONTROVERSY.**—The close of the Image-worship contention is significantly simultaneous with the beginning of the Transubstantiation conflict ; for the essence of both questions is the same, namely, the relation of symbol to substance, of picture to reality—whether and how far the properties of the latter are communicable to the former. Superstition, having captured one citadel, assailed another in the same province of religious thought. Image-worship triumphed in 842 ; in 844 Radbertus, Abbot of Corvey, inaugurated the controversy regarding Transubstantiation.

**1. Transubstantiation doctrine.**—The early Church held firmly the Real Presence in the Communion, and the real participation of Christ by the communicant ; but

the precise nature of Presence and participation had not been formally defined. While various writers, accordingly, from Justin to Gregory, use language suggestive of transubstantiation, it is impossible to decide, in the absence of controversy on the point at the time, how far such language is due to deliberate and exact thought, and how far to rhetorical and figurative representation. The tendency, however, of mediæval Christianity was towards the identification of material with spiritual; and Radbertus only gave definite form and logical consistency to ideas already, with more or less vagueness, widely held. His doctrine rests on the philosophical tenet then prevalent that every body possesses an insensible substance apart from those accidents of form, colour, taste, etc., which the senses discern. Applying this dogma to the sacrament, he maintained that, while the accidents of the bread and wine remain after consecration the same as before, the substance of the elements is inwardly changed into the actual body and blood of Christ. He supports his contention by the words of institution, by John vi. 53-56, and by alleged appearances of a body or blood on sacramental altars.

**2. Anti-transubstantiation polemic.**—In this Eucharistic as in the Image controversy, three views emerged. At the opposite pole from Radbertus's doctrine was that of Scotus Erigena, who denied not only all substantial change, but any other than a symbolic presence of Christ's body, in the consecrated elements. Midway between these extremes is the view of Ratramnus, who maintains a real, yet not corporeal, but spiritual presence of Christ's body and blood in the sacrament. He holds that after consecration the bread and wine remain the same as to substance no less than as to accidents, but that a power is divinely imparted, through which they become for all true believers the

channel of a spiritual participation of Christ's body and blood.

**3. Issue of controversy.**—Radbertus's teaching, although opposed by most contemporary theologians, harmonised with the popular sentiment and ecclesiastical tendency of the age. During the tenth century the controversy almost ceased. When it was resumed in the eleventh, chiefly through Berengarius of Tours, who in the main followed Ratramnus, transubstantiation had become part of the general faith of Christendom. Berengarius was branded as a heretic, and only through humiliating recantation, recalled but afterwards renewed, escaped excommunication. Not until 1215, however, was transubstantiation formally declared by Rome an essential article of Faith. At the approach of the Reformation the controversy revived, and disbelief in transubstantiation was a frequent charge against alleged heretics from Wyclif downwards. Radbertus's doctrine remained that of Rome, while Ratramnus became a favourite authority among Protestants. "He first pulled me by the ear," said Ridley. His doctrine in its main features was adopted by Calvin, and is substantially that of our Confession of Faith, while the teaching of Scotus was virtually reproduced by Zwingli.

## CHAPTER XV

### 1000 A.D. GENERAL SURVEY

DURING the tenth century it was widely believed that with the year 1000 the world would come to an end. The year closed with nothing remarkable to signalise it ; but the completion of the first Christian millennium constitutes a noteworthy landmark at which to pause and contemplate the condition of Christendom.

1. **Europe Christianised.**—By 1000, or shortly thereafter, almost all Europe had become nominally Christian ; the chief exceptions being Lithuania and the shore of the Baltic, along with Spain. In the last, however, a large Christian population remained.

(1) **Conversion of the Scandinavians.**—In the ninth century, under the auspices of the Emperor Louis, Anskar, a monk of Corvey, had laid the foundations of Danish, Swedish, and (indirectly) Norse Christianity. Schleswig in Denmark, Sigtuna (near the modern Upsala) in Sweden, became missionary centres, and Hamburg a missionary arch-see, where, under Anskar as archbishop, a native Scandinavian ministry was reared. For more than a century after Anskar's death the enterprise proceeded with fluctuating issue under Teutonic agency ; in all the three countries internal factions and jealousy of German aggression hindered progress. At length, about the close

of the tenth century, missionaries from England, Christian descendants of Danish pagan invaders of Britain, completed under Canute, St. Olaf, and other Scandinavian kings, the work of evangelisation.

(2) Conversion of the Slavs.—Contemporary with Anskar, the Frankish Apostle of the Scandinavians, was another monk, Methodius, the Greek Apostle of the Slavs. The territory held by this race in the ninth century stretched from the Baltic to the Balkans, and from the Elbe to the Sea of Azov, with the exception of a thick wedge of country around the Danube occupied by the Magyars. The Slav religion was a deification of the forces of Nature ; the powers of fertility being worshipped with harvest fruits, while those of disease and destruction were propitiated with animal and sometimes human sacrifices. Slavonic evangelisation, attempted with little result by Charlemagne, was successfully inaugurated by Methodius in 863 with the conversion of the Bulgarian prince, Bogoris, through whose influence the Faith was diffused among his people. The monk was a painter as well as preacher, and an impressive picture of the Last Judgment contributed largely to his missionary success. From Bulgaria he proceeded, with his brother Cyril, to Moravia, in response to an invitation from its ruler Ratislav ; from Moravia, in turn, Gospel seeds were wafted to Bohemia, whose duke was baptized by Methodius. In the next century, about 966, the marriage of the Duke of Poland to a Bohemian Christian princess became the occasion of Polish evangelisation. Finally in 988, the Russian prince, Vladimir, after sending a deputation of nobles to inquire and report regarding the faiths of the world, decided to adopt the Greek form of Christianity. The same day witnessed his admission by baptism into the Eastern Church and his alliance by marriage with the Eastern Emperor. He transported

a band of missionaries to Kieff, his capital, caused the chief national idol to be ignominiously scourged and thrown into the Dnieper, and autocratically ordered the baptism of his entire people. He followed up, like Charlemagne, compulsory conversion with religious instruction and ecclesiastical organisation. Methodius propagated among the Slavs the doctrine of the Greek Church and introduced a Slavonic **vernacular liturgy**. In the case of all but the Russians and Bulgarians, however, partly through the pacific concessions of Methodius, partly through German political intervention, partly through the greater missionary activity and organising power of the Western Church, Greek influence gradually declined and Roman advanced ; the vernacular liturgy was superseded by the Latin missal, the Greek monks by Roman clergy ; and before 1000 A.D. the Moravian, Bohemian, and Polish Churches had become parts of Roman Christendom.

(3) Conversion of the Magyars.—By the year 1000 another race of Eastern immigrants, the Magyars or Hungarians, whose religion was a phase of Nature-worship, had become a professedly Christian nation. In the ninth century they had settled on the Danube, and for two generations were the scourge of Europe, through their immense numbers, swift horsemanship, and deadly archery. Their devastations extended as far north as Bremen, as far west as Provence, as far south as Calabria, whose churches resounded with the prayer, “Save us from the arrows of the Hungarians.” At length, about the middle of the tenth century, almost simultaneously, the signal defeat of a Magyar army near Augsburg forced them into comparative civilisation, and the baptism of a Magyar prince at Constantinople led to their evangelisation. In their case, as in that of the Slavs, Roman and German influences gradually supplanted those of the

Eastern Church. In 997 Duke Stephen established Christianity as the national religion, and so commended himself to Rome by his zeal that in the year 1000, on his assumption of the royal title, he received from the Pope a golden crown and the designation of Apostolic Majesty.

2. **The Papacy demoralised.**—Papal exaltation in the ninth century was followed by humiliation and infamy in the tenth. The thousandth year, indeed, found the Roman See creditably occupied by Gerbert (Sylvester II., 999-1003), the earliest French Pope, and the foremost educationist, scientist, and mechanical genius of his day. But before and after his brief pontificate the lowest depth of papal degradation and shame was reached. During the greater part of the tenth century the “Chair of St. Peter” was filled by sons or paramours of three abandoned women of the Italian aristocracy. The Emperor Otho intervened in 965 to appoint a Pope of respectable character, but the nomination afterwards fell back into unworthy Italian hands; and during the generation after Gerbert’s death the three scandals were witnessed of a layman, who had obtained the popedom by bribery, passing in one day through all the clerical degrees, of the office being held by a profligate boy of twelve, and of three rival Popes anathematising one another. The effect of such scandals on Roman society justified Gerbert’s saying: “The morals of Rome are the horror of the world.”

3. **Church life and worship.**—(1) **Monastic declension and reform.**—The tendency of monastic life to degenerate into self-indulgence, through excessive leisure and reaction from over-asceticism, led to periodical attempts to revive the Benedictine rule in its pristine strictness. The most remarkable of such reforming movements, up to the close of the tenth century, was inaugurated by Berno at Clugny

in 910, and culminated about the year 1000 under Odilo, whom a contemporary eulogises as "the archangel of monks." The monastic houses which participated in this reform associated themselves under the designation of the Clugniac Congregation.

(2) **Clerical celibacy and morality.**—In the tenth century clerical celibacy, although often enjoined by popes and councils, was widely disregarded through open marriage or private concubinage. Earnest prelates like Ratherius of Verona and Dunstan of Canterbury endeavoured with partial success to enforce the canons of the Church ; but clerical discipline as a whole was undermined by the evil lives of numerous bishops, and by the multiplication of private chaplains who, having no parochial cure, defied episcopal authority. Many bishops lived a military, sporting, or otherwise secular life, while a large portion of the other clergy were characterised by gross ignorance and lax morality.

(3) **Pilgrimage and penance.**—Pilgrimage to Rome and other hallowed places had long been common as a penance for sin or an aid to sanctity. Towards the close of the tenth century pilgrims flocked to Jerusalem, where Christ was expected soon to appear. The institution of penance (outward humiliation supplementary to inward contrition) had already bred the triple abuse of money commutation, vicarious performance, and the widespread belief, formally censured yet practically fostered, that penance, apart from penitence, availed to secure divine pardon as well as ecclesiastical absolution. While the general tendency was to minimise penance, the more earnest began about this epoch to practise self-scourging —the mortification elaborated in the eleventh century by Damiani of Ravenna, who prescribed the recital of forty psalms, each psalm to be accompanied by a hundred strokes on the bare back.

(4) **Church worship.**—By 1000 A.D. the Roman Service book, as it still exists, was in general use throughout Western Christendom ; other liturgies, however, lingered in Scotland till the eleventh century, in Spain till the thirteenth, while a liturgy of the fourth century, compiled by St. Ambrose, has been retained at Milan to this day. The Service of Praise was conducted, as a rule, entirely by clergy ; the people, however, joined on special occasions in the *Kyrie Eleison* ("Lord, have mercy upon us"), to which from the ninth century short vernacular verses were sometimes added—the germs of vernacular hymnology. The familiar hymn "Come, Holy Spirit" (in Latin), is ascribed to King Robert of France, who was reigning in the year 1000. Organs, introduced in the seventh century, were already in widespread use. Preaching, save in the case of missionaries, was exceptional. In Holy Communion the cup was still given to the laity, but the suggestive usage had begun of administering the wine through a tube, to avoid the risk of profanation through any portion being spilt. Solitary masses (without communicant except the priest) were constantly celebrated on behalf of sick and dead. Adoration of images was equalled by veneration of relics, which, in the tenth century, gross imposture indefinitely multiplied. Mariolatry, begun in the fifth century, had been fostered by the Festivals of the Virgin's Ascension, Nativity, and Presentation, instituted in the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries, respectively. Soon after 1000 A.D., the usage commenced of Saturday being devoted to Mary's honour after the analogy of the Lord's Day. The expectation of the end of the world discouraged elaborate architecture ; yet the closing years of the tenth century saw in progress the magnificent cathedral of St. Mark in Venice.

**4. Schism between Eastern and Western Christendom.**—By the year 1000 the Schism between the Greek

and Roman Churches had almost reached its consummation ; it was formally accomplished in 1054. The way had long been prepared for the final rupture. In the sphere of doctrine the Western Church, without the sanction of the Eastern, had inserted in the Nicene Creed a word (*Filioque*) which asserted the "procession" of the Holy Spirit from the Son as well as from the Father. In the sphere of discipline the Eastern Church denied, the Western admitted, the lawfulness of eating blood ; while the Eastern Church affirmed, the Western denied, the lawfulness of clergy, married before ordination, retaining their wives. As regards jurisdiction, the Patriarch<sup>1</sup> of Constantinople at an earlier, and the Pope at a later date, had each claimed a universal episcopate ; while political rivalry between the old and the new Roman Empire had fostered ecclesiastical jealousy. Irritation, moreover, had arisen in the ninth century over the recognition of a deposed Patriarch of Constantinople by Pope Nicholas I., and over the rival claims of East and West to the allegiance of the newly-founded Bulgarian Church. The immediate occasion of the final breach was an ill-advised denunciation of Western errors, circulated by the Patriarch of Constantinople in Italy, and a counter-manifesto by the Pope through his legates at the Eastern capital. Mutual recrimination led to mutual excommunication ; and thus a schism was consummated which, in spite of repeated negotiations with a view to reunion, remains to this day unhealed.

<sup>1</sup> The title Patriarch, applied in the fourth century to bishops generally in the East, began in the fifth century to be confined to those of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. Compare the restriction of the title Pope (p. 48).

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE PONTIFICATE OF HILDEBRAND (1073-1085 A.D.)

EARLY in the year 1049 two travellers arrived at Rome in the lowly guise of pilgrims—bare-footed, roughly clad, and unattended. One was a German prelate recently nominated by the Emperor Henry III. to the popedom—Leo IX., who now entered the city without papal insignia or state, in order to become pope not by imperial patronage, but by free choice of the Roman people and clergy. The other, by whose counsel this significant procedure had been adopted, was a Tuscan by birth and a German by ancestry, who united Italian versatility with Teutonic earnestness and determination—Hildebrand. He had already risen from the humble position of a carpenter's son to be prior of the great monastery of Clugny, and had come under the magnetic influence of its reforming Abbot Odilo, who anticipated the young monk's future eminence and applied to him the words of the angel regarding the Baptist: "He shall be great in the sight of the Lord." Henceforth, for thirty-six years, first as virtual nominator and trusted counsellor of successive popes, then as pope himself, Hildebrand shaped the policy of Rome, and so far controlled the destinies of Christendom. His pontificate (as Gregory VII.) inaugurates the second and most brilliant period of the Middle Ages,

when, after a century of eclipse, the Church reached the meridian of her mediæval history ; when the outward conversion of Europe was completed ; when the power of Church and Papacy overshadowed all secular enterprise and sovereignty ; when Christendom was inspired by crusading enthusiasm, enlightened by scholastic learning, adorned with architectural masterwork ; and when most of those religious orders arose and flourished which were the chosen channel of mediæval Christian devotion. As the character and history of the Church during the earlier period were exemplified and moulded by the personality of Gregory I., so those of the Church during this second mediæval age were largely the embodiment of the spirit and the outcome of the policy of Gregory VII. The name of Hildebrand is chiefly associated with the doctrine of papal supremacy over State as well as Church ; but to estimate aright both the man and his policy, we must keep in view that not papal absolutism but ecclesiastical and religious reform was his primary aim. In order to reform the Church, he sought to secure her independence ; and, in order to maintain that independence, he upheld the supremacy of her visible Head.

**1. Hildebrand as reformer of the Church.**—When he came to Rome in 1049, Hildebrand was confronted with a papacy which, through a long line of disreputable popes, had lost the respect of Christendom ; with a papal court stained by venality, an episcopate saturated with simony, a clergy demoralised through lax discipline, and a church which exhibited, in a general decay of religion and morals, the results of unfaithful ministry. He set himself to carry out in the Church at large the reform which he had helped to accomplish in his monastic brotherhood. Through personal influence and dexterous diplomacy he secured the appointment of a succession of popes under whom the papal court was

purged. The reform of the episcopate and of the clergy as a whole was a much more difficult task. The two main clerical abuses were simony—actual or virtual purchase of benefices,—and incontinence, including priestly marriage stigmatised as concubinage. To check these practices, dioceses were visited and local councils convened by pope or papal legate; transgressors were deposed or disciplined; and the drastic method was adopted of enjoining the people to refuse as accursed the ministrations of offending clergy. The result was considerable but not adequate; to a thorough reformer it appeared like the purifying of a stream while the source remained uncleansed.

**2. Hildebrand as liberator of the Church from secular vassalage.**—The fount of evil he judged to be the dependence of the clergy on secular patronage. The priest looked for promotion not to ecclesiastical superiors, but to temporal magnates, and thus was tempted to conform to secular ways. He received his benefice on condition of his returning part of its revenues to the patron in lieu of feudal service. His ministry, thus inaugurated with simony, was vitiated, and his character demoralised. Lay patronage, accordingly, and ecclesiastical vassalage in every sphere from the papacy downwards, Hildebrand resolutely assailed. It was in view of such assault that he had induced Leo to treat his imperial nomination as inadequate. As part of the same policy, ten years later, during the Emperor Henry IV.'s minority, the system of papal election, still substantially retained, was established by a Roman Council—the system which practically vests the appointment of pope in a College of Cardinals composed of the suburban bishops and leading clergy of Rome. The liberation of the papacy from secular bondage thus accomplished, the next stage of the process, the greater and bolder task of emancipating the episcopate, was

reserved for Hildebrand's own pontificate. In the settlement of bishops the appointment by the lay patron had come to be the only real thing—the ecclesiastical institution an empty formality. Gregory resolved that the form should become a reality and the reality a form. The usage had long prevailed of the bishops-designate being invested by the sovereign or noble patron with staff and ring, the insignia of pastoral office, and of their promising simultaneously feudal allegiance. Such significant investiture, which plainly implied the prelate's dependence for his ecclesiastical status, and not merely for his temporal emoluments, on the secular power, was interdicted by a Roman Council in 1075, on pain of excommunication as well for the investor as for the invested.

**3. Hildebrand as champion of papal supremacy over temporal sovereignty.**—The decree of 1075, if generally enforced, would have involved a collision with every potentate in Europe; but Hildebrand astutely restricted meanwhile the arena of conflict to the realm which was at once the most august and (owing to internal strife) the least prepared at the time for a contest—the German Roman Empire. Excommunication in terms of the decree was pronounced on prominent subjects of the emperor, and Henry, on declining to recognise the papal ban, was himself cited to Rome for trial. The challenge thus thrown down was boldly taken up. Supported by his nobility and a portion of the German hierarchy, the emperor not only ignored Gregory's citation, but secured his deposition by a council of princes and prelates at Worms. The pope replied by excommunicating Henry with his subservient bishops, and by formally releasing his subjects from allegiance. Thus the controversy regarding patronage and investiture developed into a struggle for supremacy. The emperor was not prepared

for the issue. Christendom, as a whole, sympathised with a pope who had grappled with the many-headed hydra of ecclesiastical abuse. The archbishop of Utrecht, one of the imperial advisers, was struck down with mortal malady while deriding in his cathedral the papal ban ; and the story spread that on his deathbed he sent to Henry this message : “ The supporters of your iniquity are damned to all eternity.” One by one, impelled by superstitious fear, conscientious compunction, or worldly prudence, the excommunicated prelates fell away from the emperor’s cause and sought papal absolution. One by one, disaffected princes and nobles of the empire, emboldened by imperial troubles, renounced allegiance. The revolt culminated in a convention at Tribur in the autumn of 1076, when it was resolved to depose the emperor in the following Lent, unless in the interval he had made peace with Rome.

**4. Hildebrand's triumph at Canossa.**—Deserted on almost every side, Henry, in penitential guise, accompanied only by his faithful wife and a few attendants, crossed the Alps in the dead of winter into Italy. The pope had retired to the fortress of Canossa in the Apennines. Thither the humbled emperor repaired, and for three days, amid the keen frost of January, stood from morning till dusk, with bared feet and garb of sack-cloth, between the outer and inner walls of the fortress, awaiting the papal invitation to enter. Admitted at length on the fourth day into Gregory’s presence, the imperial penitent and stalwart suppliant knelt meekly before the diminutive and emaciated old man, and received absolution on the understanding that he refrained from the exercise of imperial authority until a German diet determined the future of the Empire.

**5. Hildebrand's adversity and death.**—At Canossa the climax of Gregory’s success was reached ; a period of

humiliation ensued. The absolved emperor repented of his repentance, and broke his pledges. His abasement won for him widespread sympathy, while Hildebrand's severity alienated some support from the papal cause. An imperial rival, whose pretensions the pope recognised, perished in battle ; and Henry thereafter marched against Rome, where an anti-pope, nominated by himself, placed on his head the imperial crown. Gregory was rescued from capture only by the opportune intervention of his Norman ally, Duke Robert Guiscard, and retreated to Salerno in the south of Italy, where he died in 1085. "I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore I die in exile," were his last words—the sincere, if somewhat self-righteous, utterance of one who believed that his whole life had been, what in part it certainly was, a witness and warfare for right against wrong. Personally, Hildebrand had been abased ; but the triumph of papacy and Church at Canossa could not be effaced by any surrender to mere material force. The policy he had inaugurated was continued by succeeding popes, and under Innocent III. the Hildebrandic ideal of papal supremacy was realised.

**6. Review of Hildebrand's policy.**—Gregory's reforming efforts, however conscientious, were marred by his identification of clerical marriage with unchastity ; his liberation of the Church's ministry from secular vassalage, only to place it under papal bondage, proved eventually to be a cure even worse than the disease ; and the claim of papal supremacy in the temporal sphere must be regarded by many Catholics and all Protestants as a pernicious pretension. It must be admitted, also, that in the prosecution of his policy he was sometimes neither straightforward nor scrupulous. But, after a period of religious declension, he helped greatly to infuse into Christendom the more earnest spirit embodied, partly,

in the foundation of new religious orders,<sup>1</sup> and signally manifested in the life and work of St. Bernard.<sup>2</sup> In an age, also, of ecclesiastical abuses, Hildebrand did much to cleanse the Church's Augean stables, and to secure for a discredited papacy the respect of Christendom. In times, moreover, of feudal oppression he largely increased the power of the pope to restrain princely despotism, and the power of the clergy as a whole to interpose as an independent authority between the strong and the weak. His ambition was inordinate, but not personal or selfish. He wished the papacy to be strong in order that it might reform the Church; he desired the Church to be strong in order that it might overcome the world.

<sup>1</sup> Of these the chief were the Carthusian (from Chartreuse, the seat of the mother-mонасты), founded by Bruno of Rheims in 1084, and the Cistercian (from Citeaux, near Dijon), founded by Robert of Champagne in 1098. To the following century belongs the origin of the Premonstrants, an order of monastic Canons, established (1121) by Norbert at Prémontre near Laon; and also of the Carmelites, at first a brotherhood of pilgrims and crusaders who became hermits on Mount Carmel (1156).

<sup>2</sup> St. Bernard (1091-1153), Abbot of Clairvaux, was the most eloquent preacher and most influential ecclesiastic of his time. To his adhesion and propagation are mainly due the lustre and success of the Cistercian Order, which during his life was notable for simplicity of life and ritual, although afterwards wealth led to luxury. Bernard's connection with the Crusades and Scholasticism will be afterwards noted. His protest against persecution of the Jews is memorable. His exquisite Hymns are sung by almost every Church in Christendom.

## CHAPTER XVII

### INAUGURATION (1095 A.D.) AND ISSUE OF THE CRUSADES

THE attraction of pilgrims to the Holy Land towards the close of the tenth century, when the Second Advent was expected (p. 98), continued after that expectation had ceased. In earlier times pilgrims had been treated by Mahometans with consideration ; but after the conquest of Palestine by the Fatimites of Egypt in 969, a policy of molestation began, which moved Sylvester II. to call for the intervention of Christendom. The death of that Pope in 1003 arrested the movement, and, amid the papal degradation which ensued, the crusading spirit slumbered. It was reawakened by Hildebrand. The rule of civilised Fatimites had meanwhile given place to that of barbarous Turks ; and in the experience both of pilgrims and of the resident Christian population, the Fatimite whip had been exchanged for the Tartar scorpion. Reports of atrocities aroused the indignation of Europe. "Christians," writes Gregory to the Emperor Henry IV., "are daily killed like cattle" ; and he declares that 50,000 men are preparing for a crusade. The Pope was impelled not only by humanity and religious zeal, but by the hope of accomplishing, through alliance against a common foe, the reunion of Eastern and Western Christendom. Amid the conflict, however, between

Papacy and Empire, the enterprise was once more postponed.

1. **Inauguration of the Crusades at Clermont.**—To Peter, the Hermit of Amiens, and to his impassioned preaching, is mainly ascribed by mediæval chronicles, largely legendary, the development of the crusading purpose into a universal and enthusiastic movement. The Hermit's power, however, extended little beyond the ignorant masses, 40,000 of whom, undisciplined and ill-armed, he led in person to disaster and fruitless death. On a more solid historical basis rests the claim of Urban II., the disciple and first real successor of Hildebrand, to the doubtful honour of stirring into activity the real forces of Western Christendom. After a preliminary Synod at Piacenza, a great Church Council and a Congress were convened in 1095 at Clermont in France: fourteen archbishops, two hundred and twenty-five bishops, one hundred abbots, and innumerable other clergy, as well as laymen of all ranks, responded to the call. From a pulpit in the market-place Urban addressed the vast assemblage, dwelling on the sanctity of Jerusalem and the Holy Land, the foulness of Moslem desecrations, and the brutality of Tartar outrages. "Turn against the enemies of the Christian name," he cried, "the weapons stained by mutual slaughter, and count it joy to die for Christ where He died for you." The papal eloquence was interrupted by the universal exclamation which became the Crusaders' war-cry, *Deus Vult*, "It is the will of God"; and thousands signified at once their enlistment in the sacred cause by attaching to their shoulders the emblem of the Cross. Thus was inaugurated a movement unique in history—a movement in which millions of men took active part, and which for two centuries dominated the thoughts and helped to mould the fortunes of European Christendom.

**2. Contributory motives to crusading zeal.**—While religious enthusiasm was the main source of crusading activity, other influences helped to swell the stream. Hildebrand's successors discerned in their furtherance of the movement the means of enhancing papal prestige, and in the conquest of Syria by Western Christians the earnest of a future absorption of Eastern Christendom into the Roman fold. Bishops and abbots recognised in the Crusade not only a religious duty but a means of ecclesiastical enrichment, through the purchase for the Church of lands forced into the market to provide the cost of military equipments. Nobles and knights were attracted to the standard by love of adventure or hope of spoil. Sovereigns perceived that the prolonged absence of powerful and troublesome subjects favoured the consolidation of monarchy. The rising seaports of the Mediterranean saw in the expeditions an important outlet for the extension of commerce. Finally, all on whom their social lot or previous life entailed real or fancied hardship found in crusading enterprises a welcome escape into a world of fresh experience. To the peasant they promised deliverance from grinding vassalage; to the unspiritual monk release from monotonous routine; the ecclesiastical delinquent was offered the remission of his penance; the debtor after enlistment was exempt from prosecution; even the criminal who became a Crusader received an amnesty for his crimes.

**3. Successive Crusades and their direct results.**—(1) The first expedition (1096-99), under Godfrey of Bouillon, culminated in the capture of Jerusalem, and in the establishment there of a kingdom which eventually embraced all Palestine, with the principalities of Antioch and Edessa as outlying bulwarks. Godfrey became the first king, but refused to wear a crown of gold where his Lord had been crowned with thorns. Coterminous

with the kingdom, a patriarchate of Jerusalem was constituted as part of Roman Christendom, with bishoprics at Bethlehem and elsewhere under its jurisdiction. (2) The second Crusade (1147) was instigated by the fall of Edessa and by fear of Jerusalem sharing its fate. Pope Eugenius III. was the originator of this expedition, St. Bernard of Clairvaux its apostle, the Emperor Conrad III. and King Louis VII. of France its leaders. Partly through the perfidy of the Greek Emperor Comnenus, the enterprise was fruitless except in so far as, by engaging otherwise Moslem strength, it intercepted the blow intended for Jerusalem. (3) Half a century later the blow descended ; the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem fell before the victorious Saladin. Hence originated the third Crusade (1189) for the recovery of Palestine, under the Emperor Barbarossa (who at an early stage was drowned), Philip of France, and Richard Cœur de Lion. Acre, Joppa, and Ascelon were captured ; but progress was arrested by intestine strife ; and Richard, deserted and conspired against at home by Philip, concluded a long truce with Saladin, which secured for Christians the right of pilgrimage to Holy Places without molestation or taxation. (4) The fourth expedition (1215) became a crusade only in name. Originated by Pope Innocent III., it aimed afresh at the recovery of the Holy Land ; but its leader, Baldwin of Flanders, conducted his army to Constantinople on pretext of enthroning a rightful imperial claimant, and ultimately established there a Latin empire, seating himself on the throne. This empire lasted for fully half a century, during which the Roman See, under Latin imperial auspices, maintained nominal supremacy over the Eastern Church. (5) The fifth Crusade (1228) was undertaken by an excommunicated leader, and carried on with a comparatively small force ; yet it accomplished more than

any previous expedition except the first. The Emperor Frederick II. had come under the papal ban for tardiness in fulfilling his crusading vow. Without waiting for absolution he led his army to Palestine, and found the Mahometans there at war with other Moslems and willing to make terms. He secured the cession of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Joppa, and returned home not to receive thanks for securing Christian rights by peaceful means, but to be branded by the Pope as an ecclesiastical rebel and a spiritual traitor, who had made a dishonourable compromise with infidels. (6) The advantage secured by Frederick was lost in 1248, when Jerusalem fell once more before the Tartars. Hence followed the two unsuccessful Crusades (sixth and seventh) under St. Louis of France, who lost in the former (1249) his liberty, at Damietta, and in the latter (1270) his life through pestilence, at Tunis. The genuine, although superstitious, devotion of this royal saint, of whom Voltaire is constrained to testify "It is not given to man to carry virtue further," irradiates as with the light of a beautiful sunset a declining cause. As the bright vision of a recovered Jerusalem faded from his dying gaze, he was heard to cry, as if transferring his aspirations from the earthly to the heavenly Zion: "I will enter Thy House, O Lord; I will worship within Thy Sanctuary." With the death of Louis the epoch of Crusades virtually closed. The enthusiasm had died out, partly through the cessation of gross outrage on Christians, partly because papal influence, on which the Crusades latterly depended, had begun to wane, and partly because commercial relations with Moslems had diminished the intensity of mutual hatred.

**4. Indirect effects of the Crusades.**—The direct and designed results of the enterprises were meagre and transient, but the indirect and incidental issues were

substantial and enduring. (1) If the Crusades failed permanently to recover Palestine from Moslem possession, they accomplished the more important task of **checking Moslem aggression**. The danger to Christian Europe from the Saracens in the eighth century was renewed through the victorious progress of the Tartars in the eleventh and twelfth ; and just as the Saracen advance was stayed by the combination of Christian armies under Charles Martel and the consolidation of Christian populations under Charlemagne, so the Tartar march westward could only have been arrested through encounter with a united Christendom. By providing a bond of European union the Crusades postponed for centuries the fall of Constantinople and of the Eastern Empire, until that catastrophe ceased to imperil European Christianity. (2) The Crusades contributed largely to the growth of ecclesiastical and especially papal wealth and power. Bishops and monasteries, as we have seen, obtained lands at prices far below value ; crusading proprietors, also, often placed their estates, during absence, under ecclesiastical trusteeship. When neither father nor sons returned from the East, the trustee frequently became owner, either through lack of undoubted heirs or through previous compact, in return for masses performed for the Crusader's safety in life and for the salvation of his soul after death. Increase of wealth led to growth of power, which was further enhanced through the social precedence acquired by clergy in the prolonged absence of landowners, and through the prestige of a popular religious movement attaching itself to the official representatives of religion. In this augmentation of wealth and power the papacy conspicuously shared. The Saladin tithe, imposed originally by the Pope on all property for the recovery of Jerusalem from that prince, continued long afterwards to be exacted from the faithful

as a source of papal income. The monastic and secular clergy at first taxed themselves, and latterly were taxed in spite of themselves, for the support of the papacy in proposed Crusades, many of which never took place. By the promotion, moreover, of successive enterprises, the Pope became, more than ever, the visible Head of Christendom, whose crusading summons secular potentates were expected or constrained to obey. (3) Ultimately, however, the Crusades were the means of undermining the power of papacy and clergy. Increase of wealth conduced to the growth of corruptions which eventually became intolerable, while the liberalising influence of contact with Greek and Arab civilisation led to the gradual emancipation of Europe from ecclesiastical superstition and priestly thrall. In the case of the papacy, in particular, its excessive assumptions, fostered by crusading devotion under its auspices, caused at length a strong reaction; the abuse of indulgences, developed into flagrancy though not initiated by the Crusades, became in a later age the immediate occasion of Luther's breach with Rome; and the intellectual revival, of which the Crusaders were the unconscious pioneers, issued in the rejection, first by a few, then by multitudes, of those unhistorical traditions which in earlier times had been bulwarks of papal authority and power.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### ALBIGENSIAN AND WALDENSIAN REVOLT (1167-1179 A.D.)

THE fresh religious impulse which, after a century of torpor, accompanied and in part resulted from Hildebrand's reforming zeal and the crusading movement, led, during the twelfth century, to widespread inquiry into the Church's doctrine and institutions. A twofold development of defence and of revolt was the issue. The Schoolmen (see p. 129) fortified by elaborate argument the Church's dogmas; the sectaries protested by secession against what they regarded as her errors. The sects of this period are divisible into two classes, according as their revolt proceeded from a genuine or a spurious reforming standpoint, and tended towards a return to apostolic Christianity, or towards a revival of early heresy. Of the former class the most notable were the Waldenses, of the latter the Albigenses.

I. THE ALBIGENSES (so called from Albi in Languedoc, which was at one period their rallying-place) were one of a group of sects which, under the general designation, for the most part, of Cathari, or Puritans, were found in various lands of Southern Europe from the Bosphorus to the Atlantic. They repudiated the authority of ecclesiastical tradition, circulated Scripture (in the vernacular) as the only rule of faith, and rejected transubstantiation,

purgatory, masses for the dead, adoration of images, and invocation of saints. So far they might be regarded as pioneers of Protestantism, but to this testimony against Romish errors they added yet graver errors of their own. Maintaining, in a Manichean sense, the antagonism between spirit and matter, they regarded the latter as the seat of Evil, ascribed to the Power of darkness the creation of man's animal nature, rejected the whole or part of the Old Testament as of Satanic origin, explained away the incarnation as a semblance, the resurrection as a symbol, and abjured all baptism except that of the Spirit. To "perfect" or fully-initiated members marriage, eating of flesh, and property were interdicted. The magnitude of the movement was first realised in 1167, when a great convention of the sects took place at Toulouse. In 1179 they were anathematised by a General Council at Rome. Three methods of suppression were adopted. First their conversion was attempted, without result, by French monks of the Cistercian order, and with limited success by Spanish missionaries, including the future founder of the Dominicans. Then, in 1208, a so-called Crusade deluged the whole south of France with their blood. Finally, the infamous **Inquisition**, instituted for the purpose in 1229, with its secret espionage, ensnaring examination, inhuman torture, and travesty of trial, completed the work of ruthless extermination.

II. THE WALDENSES.—1. **Origin.**—In 1170, three years after the Congress at Toulouse, Waldo, a wealthy merchant of Lyons, came under deep religious impressions, on the sudden death of a friend. "Which is the surest road to heaven?" he asked a canon of the Cathedral. "Here is Christ's precept in the Gospel," was the reply: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." Waldo heard and obeyed—he did more

He wished to read Scripture for himself, and employed two ecclesiastics to translate the Gospels and other parts of the New Testament into the Romance tongue. His mind became full of evangelical truth, and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth spake. Along with Christ's call (which he regarded as universally applicable) to the life of poverty, he associated Christ's command to "preach the gospel to every creature." He saw around him the chief pastors of the Church living in luxury and scarcely preaching at all. His resolve was formed. He founded a society of "Poor Men of Lyons," to live the life and to do the work from which the rich clergy had turned away. Clad in coarse woollen raiment, wearing wooden shoes, and with the Romance Gospels in their hands, Waldo and his associates proclaimed in Lyons and the surrounding country the truths of Holy Writ.

**2. Interdict and revolt.**—Such unlicensed preaching was an ecclesiastical irregularity ; but no defiance of the Church was intended, and, at this stage, Waldo no more thought of severance from Catholic Christendom than Wesley, originally, of severance from the Church of England. Accordingly, when in 1177 the Archbishop of Lyons forbade the "Poor Men" to preach in public, and then excommunicated them because they preferred to "obey God rather than men," Waldo appealed to the Pope. He was received at first by Alexander III. with a friendly embrace, and his vow of poverty was approved ; but the same Council of 1179 which anathematised the Albigenses for heresy interdicted the Waldenses from preaching, nominally on the ground of their incompetency. By a strange irony the chief allegation against them was that two of the "Poor Men" (apparently misunderstanding the catch-question, "Do you believe in the mother of Christ ?") had placed the Virgin on the same level, as an object of faith, with the Trinity ! The questioner himself,

Archdeacon Map, of Oxford, discloses the real cause of the interdict. "These men," he said to the Council, "begin now very humbly; but if we admit them, we ourselves shall be driven out." "Liberty of prophesying" within the Church having thus been refused, Waldo and his friends, convinced of their divine vocation, had no alternative but secession; and in 1183 the schism was sealed at Verona, when a synod, at which Pope Lucius III. presided, included the rebellious "Poor Men" among sectaries anathematised. Twenty-three years later, Pope Innocent III. discerned the mistake of his predecessors, and tried to win back the Waldenses by conciliatory overtures. He succeeded with some, whom he constituted into an order of "Catholic Poor," with permission to preach under episcopal supervision; but for the sect as a whole the concession came too late.

**3. Progress and persecution.**—The Waldensian revolt was followed by (1) missionary diffusion. Before 1200 the sect had spread over the north of Italy and of Spain, over the south of Germany and of France. By 1300 there were Waldensian centres in Austria, Hungary, Poland, Bohemia, Saxony, and the Netherlands. The earliest clear evidence of their presence in the Alpine valleys of Piedmont belongs to the year 1210. In that secluded region some lingering influence of Claudius, Bishop of Turin, in the ninth century (see p. 90), may have preserved for them a receptive soil. His unworthy successor at the date mentioned sought and all but obtained authority from the Emperor Otho IV. to suppress "those tare-sowing heretics." Contemporary records of adversaries bear impartial witness to the causes of Waldensian success—clerical ignorance, laxity of life, and neglect of duty, as compared with the Bible knowledge, pure morals, and unwearied zeal of the evangelists. They are described as penetrating into leper houses and swim

ming across rivers in pursuit of their missionary ministry. They are charged with disguising themselves as pedlars to obtain the opportunity, after selling earthly wares, of setting before purchasers what they called more precious articles of heavenly merchandise. "Among all the sects," testifies a Catholic writer of the thirteenth century, "none has been more pernicious than the sect of Lyons, both because it is universally diffused, and because, while other sectaries repel by blasphemy, these maintain a great appearance of piety." (2) **Development of doctrine.** Before the secession Waldensian divergence from Roman dogma was inconsiderable; after the schism it gradually widened, and in the thirteenth century the creed of the sect anticipated a large portion of the Reformed Faith of a later age. They maintained the supreme authority of Scripture, as well as the right of all to read it in their own tongue, and to interpret it by their own judgment. They disowned papal authority and sacerdotal assumption, emphasising the universal priesthood of believers, yet retaining, on grounds of order and expediency, a specially ordained and (in pre-Reformation times) three-fold ministry. They rejected purgatory, masses for the dead, invocation of Virgin and Saints, extreme unction, and transubstantiation, holding, however, a mystical presence of Christ in the bread when received by the faithful communicant, though not in the hand of the priest. They repudiated compulsory celibacy, while honouring it as a higher state; compulsory tithes, also, while acknowledging the claim of the ministry to support. They abjured indulgences, but retained confession, penance, and absolution, regarding these, however, as lawfully administered by pious laymen. (3) Amid such missionary and doctrinal progress, Catholic intolerance deepened into persecution. From 1233 onwards, until the age of the Reformation, the severities of the Inquisi-

tion—imprisonment, torture, and the stake—continued to be inflicted on the Waldenses, supplemented by occasional “Crusades.” The most notable of these took place in 1488 under Innocent VIII., when, among other barbarities, a multitude of fugitives—men, women, and children—were pitilessly smoked to death in an Alpine cave. Through such persistent persecution and repression, as well as through frequent absorption into later-organised reforming communities, the Waldensian Church, gradually contracted, became eventually confined to the romantic valleys which it still retains. After the Reformation, molestation still continued; in 1655 occurred that terrible massacre of 6000 valley people which roused Cromwell’s wrath, and inspired Milton’s famous sonnet; the last persecution of magnitude took place in 1686.

**4. Influence on Christendom.**—The Waldenses deserve well the title of pioneers, by pre-eminence, of the Reformation. From the Protestant standpoint, doubtless, their creed was in many particulars defective, especially as regards the doctrine of Justification by Faith, until, in the sixteenth century, German and Swiss reformers supplied what was lacking. None the less, during the period of their wide extension, the diffusion by the Waldenses of Bible knowledge and biblical doctrine, their protest against Romish errors and abuses, above all their earnest piety and pure life, in accordance with the *Noble Lesson*,<sup>1</sup> not only educated, intellectually and spiritually, a considerable portion of Christendom, but prepared a soil for future seeds of reforming influence. In our own time,

<sup>1</sup> The *Noble Lesson* is a poetical sermon, in which a rehearsal of Old and New Testament history is united with an impressive enforcement of Gospel truth and Christian virtue in view of coming judgment. The poem (in spite of an apparent internal indication of time) is of uncertain date, but is attributed by Professor Comba of Florence to the early part of the thirteenth century.

amid full religious toleration, and latterly even cordial appreciation from the Italian Government, the missionary opportunities of the Waldenses have been renewed ; and to their evangelistic zeal is mainly due the modern progress (limited, it must be admitted, yet encouraging) of Protestantism in Italy.

## CHAPTER XIX

### SUMMIT OF PAPAL POWER UNDER INNOCENT III. (1198-1216); RISE OF MENDICANT ORDERS

“THE successor of St. Peter stands midway between God and man; below God, above man; Judge of all, judged of none.” So Innocent III. proclaimed in his inaugural sermon; and in one of his letters he declares that to the Pope “has been committed not only the whole Church but the whole world,” with “the right of finally disposing the imperial and all other crowns.” During the seven years preceding his elevation he had lived as a recluse, and composed a treatise on the “Contempt of the World.” The cardinals discerned better than himself his proper destiny, and summoned to the papedom at the age of thirty-seven the man by whom the Hildebrandic ideal of papal supremacy was most vividly apprehended and most fully realised.

1. **Innocent as the Arbiter of Europe.**—Political circumstances favoured papal assumption. Rival candidates for the Empire eagerly sought Innocent’s support; and Otho of Brunswick acknowledged publicly, as the price of papal favour, that he wore the imperial crown “by the grace of God and the apostolic see.” When he encroached, afterwards, on the Pope’s domains, a papal ban drove him from his throne. The King of France, Philip Augustus,

weakened the allegiance of his subjects, as well as exposed himself to the censure of the Church, by the unrighteous divorce of his queen. In vain a subservient French council condoned his offence. Innocent, supported by national opinion, intervened with an interdict which deprived both king and kingdom of religious rites, and wrung from Philip submission to papal discipline and reparation to his injured wife. In England, a controversy between the Pope and King John issued in the King's excommunication. The unpopularity and consequent weakness of John enabled Innocent to extract from him, as the price of absolution, an acknowledgment of the Pope as feudal suzerain, and a humiliating annual tribute of 1000 marks. So, too, the Prince of Arragon, in return for papal recognition of his royal title, laid crown and sceptre on the altar of St. Peter's in token of feudal submission. In Hungary, the rivalry of royal candidates gave Innocent the opportunity of adjudication; and even the Prince of Bulgaria, which was within Eastern Christendom, was fain to secure his royal dignity by accepting papal investiture. During Innocent's pontificate the short-lived Latin Empire was established at Constantinople (see p. 111), and, while the Pope protested against the usurper's enterprise, he accepted his homage and that of subservient Eastern bishops. In one quarter alone papal supremacy was disowned. An envoy from Innocent arrived at the Russian Court, to offer Prince Roman a royal title and investment with St. Peter's sword. "Is it a weapon like this of mine which your master has?" asked the Russ. "If so, then he may dispose of kingdoms; but so long as I carry *this* sword on my thigh, I need no other."

2. Council of Rome in 1215.—At this General Council, held in the Lateran Palace shortly before

Innocent's death, papal authority was conspicuous. Over 2000 bishops and abbots, or their plenipotentiaries, attended, with ambassadors from almost every Christian court; and Eastern patriarchs sat in council with Western primates under papal presidency. The power of the papacy was further signalised by the contracted function of the assembled prelates. They occupied the position only of assessors and advisers of the Pope, in whose name decrees were promulgated. Finally, the extent of papal authority was shown in the wide scope of the debates. In the spiritual sphere Transubstantiation was then first declared an essential article of the Church's creed, and Confession to the priest an indispensable practice of Christian life; while, on the borderland of the sacred and secular, the equipment of a fresh crusade (arrested by Innocent's death) was arranged. But the Council intruded also boldly into the province of politics by the discussion of the Magna Charta and the determination of rival claims to Languedoc. With this unique assembly the high-water mark of papal greatness was attained.

**3. St. Francis and St. Dominic.**—In the summer of 1209 Innocent was walking at sunset on the Lateran Terrace, when a toil-worn pilgrim, in mendicant guise, approached to lay before him a proposal to revive the Church and convert the world by a brotherhood of pauper-preachers. It was Francis of Assisi, a young man of twenty-seven, prematurely old through asceticism, whose gay youth had been sobered by captivity and illness, and sanctified by visions<sup>1</sup> and vows. Repelled at first by his mean appearance, the Pontiff, after

<sup>1</sup> The Saint's celebrated vision of Christ, which resulted (perhaps through mysterious influence of soul on body, perhaps through his unconscious action during ecstasy) in nail-marks found on his hands and feet, took place two years before his death. See Trench's *Medieval Church*, and Sabatier's graphic *Life of St. Francis*.

a night's reflection, discerned in this new enthusiast, who had chosen Poverty as his bride and loved all creatures as brethren, a timely rival to the Poor Men of Lyons, whom papal short-sightedness had estranged. The Mendicant of Assisi was dismissed with a benediction to found the Order of Grey<sup>1</sup> Friars. Six years later Innocent sanctioned the Dominican Order of Black<sup>1</sup> Friars (Mendicants also after 1220), for propagating truth and converting heretics. Dominic had spent his youth, not like Francis, in idle pleasure, but in hard study at a Spanish university, where the passion of self-impoverishment moved him to sell even his books to feed the famishing. In 1205 he had come to France for the conversion of the Albigenses, which Cistercian monks and papal legates had attempted in vain. "Cast off those sumptuous robes; send away those richly caparisoned palfreys; go barefoot, without purse or scrip, like the apostles; outlabour, outfast those false teachers," was the Spaniard's counsel to his unsuccessful predecessors. His own practice corresponded with his precept; and the moderate success which ensued might have become signal, had not the assassination of a papal legate goaded Innocent to sanction the Albigensian crusade. The Pope was naturally humane, and remorse on account of crusading atrocities more easily instigated than arrested, probably inclined him now towards a proposal to eradicate heresy by more pacific means. He did not foresee that, after his own and Dominic's death, the new brotherhood, as the executors of the Inquisition, would outvie even the "Crusaders" in cruelty.

4. Mendicant aims and methods.—Tradition represents Francis and Dominic meeting at Rome, embracing each other, and dividing Christendom between them.

<sup>1</sup> So called from their dress.

The story symbolises at once their common aims and methods, and the future power and rivalry of the two fraternities. The Mendicants adopted the triple vow of celibate chastity, obedience, and poverty, but differed from earlier orders in three main particulars which related to a threefold felt need of the times. (1) Order after order had arisen to exemplify personal self-denial and self-impoverishment; but each in turn, when its fame attracted rich gifts to its treasures, became tainted with luxury and self-indulgence. Francis and Dominic founded brotherhoods designed, through renunciation of corporate as well as personal property, to exemplify real, not nominal poverty. (2) The monks lived mainly in retirement from society; the friars moved among men as aggressive missionaries. They not only revived that zeal for the world's conversion which had characterised early monasticism—Francis himself boldly sought to convert the Sultan of Egypt—but they undertook, as Catholic rivals of the Waldenses, the work which the monks had scarcely attempted and the parish clergy had long neglected, of arousing and instructing the careless and ignorant in Christendom. Both orders emphasised the ordinance of preaching. The Dominicans adopted an intellectual form of address, aimed at counteracting heresy, and, while not neglecting the common people, sought specially to influence the classes; the Franciscans appealed more to the emotional nature, dealt with duty rather than dogma, and tried to win the masses. (3) Earlier religious orders separated themselves not merely from the world but, in a sense, from the Church. The Mendicants not only entered the world, but opened their fraternities to the Church at large. In addition to fully devoted friars and sisters, they had "Tertiaries," or members of a third section of each order. These were men and women bound

neither to celibacy nor to poverty, but prepared to support the regular friars and sisters with sympathy and co-operation, to attend the ministrations of their order's priests and preachers, to refrain from gay attire, and strictly to observe fast and festival. It was a bold attempt, in an age of priestly and monastic exclusiveness, to break down the barrier between clergy and laity, between consecrated and so-called secular life. It was an important step towards the recognition of the great truth, only after the Reformation widely understood, that merchant and artisan, wife and mother, may, equally with priest or monk, "sister" or nun, be consecrated men and women.

5. The Mendicant Orders after the death of their founders.—Dominic died in 1221, Francis in 1226. The subsequent history of the orders is one of mingled light and shade. Amid missionary zeal, papal patronage, and popular favour, they rapidly increased; and two other fraternities, the Carmelites (p. 107) and Augustinians (to the latter of whom Luther belonged), were added ere long to the Mendicant ranks. Earnest bishops, like Grossetête of Lincoln, employed friars to supplement the defective ministry of parochial clergy; while Raymond Lull, the Franciscan missionary and martyr among the Saracens, Ascelin, the Dominican evangelist in Tartary, and Monte Corvino, the Franciscan pioneer of Christianity in China, worthily exemplified foreign-mission zeal. In the sphere of theology, Dominicans and Franciscans occupied, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the foremost place; while, in that of practical philanthropy, the devotion of Francis, who nursed lepers and kissed their sores to prove his sympathy, was notably reproduced during the terrible visitation of the Black Death (1347, 1348), when thousands of Franciscans died through faithful ministry to otherwise neglected victims.

of the plague. On the other hand, moral degeneracy early appeared. The vow of absolute poverty was found impracticable, and soon began to be evaded—the orders enjoying the use of property which nominally they surrendered to the Pope. But the friars, when they ceased to be paupers, continued often to be mendicants ; and mendicancy, when not associated with ascetic spirituality, became the mother of idleness and the cloak of covetousness. The Confessional, formerly under the control of parish priests, but now committed by the papacy to the Mendicants also, became too often in their hands a venal dispensary of indulgence. The connection of the Dominicans with the Inquisition has already been mentioned. By the time of Wyclif the friars were noted for laxity and greed. While the Waldensians, although repressed through persecution, maintained a worthy and influential witness to Bible truth, and thus prepared the way for the Reformation, the prosperous Mendicants, originating in a similar and equally earnest movement, but basing their ministry on a human rule and allying themselves with a secularised papacy, became gradually conformed to the world which they were meant to transform. Before the Reformation they had become more corrupt than the monks and parochial priests whose deficiencies they had at first supplied.

## CHAPTER XX

### THOMAS AQUINAS AND THE CULMINATION OF SCHOLASTICISM (1257-1274 A.D.)

AMONG the scholars of Albert the Great, an eminent Dominican doctor, at Cologne, in 1245, was a young Neapolitan friar, of noble birth, whose taciturn disposition and laborious study earned from his comrades the nickname of the “dumb ox of Sicily.” “That dumb ox,” said his more discerning teacher, “will yet fill the world with his lowing.” The prophecy was amply fulfilled. The student was Thomas of Aquino, afterwards the “Angelic Doctor” and most illustrious of the Schoolmen. His “Sum of all Theology” became the chief authority for the doctrine of the Church during the later Middle Ages, received a place beside the Bible on the table of the Council of Trent in 1545, and has been commended anew by the present Pope, Leo XIII., in an Encyclical Letter, to all theological teachers and seminaries as a treasury of “golden wisdom.”

1. **Origin and aim of Scholasticism.**—The same revival of religious zeal which moved the Crusaders to protect the Holy Sepulchre from desecration, which prompted the papacy, under Hildebrand, to rescue the Church from secular vassalage, and which paved the way for Waldensian reformation and Mendicant devotion

simultaneously manifested itself, within the theological sphere, in the scholastic defence of the Church's Creed against scepticism and heresy. Scholastic theology united loyalty to the doctrines of the Church with their exposition and vindication, not only as objects of faith and dicta of authority, but as subjects of inquiry and deductions of reason. Conservative in creed but progressive in standpoint, daring not to doubt the Church's dogmas, yet recognising the need of meeting the doubts of others, the Schoolmen sought to fortify old truth with fresh bulwarks of logic and philosophy. If they cut few fresh blocks from the theological quarry, they shaped and chiselled with laborious masonry the stones already quarried, and constructed out of them, with rare architectural skill, a solid and symmetrical edifice.

**2. Scholasticism before Aquinas.** — The father of Scholastic Theology is usually held to be Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury (d. 1109), whose motto was "Believe in order to understand." Starting from reverent faith, we ought, he held, to rise through logical processes, into an intelligent perception and rational acceptance of truths divinely revealed. He applied his principles mainly to the Existence of God, the Incarnation, and the Atonement. After his death, scholastic theology came into disrepute through the famous Abelard of Nantes (d. 1142), who agreed with Anselm as to the need of harmonising faith with reason, but reversed their relative position, adopting as his watchword "Understand before you believe." From this standpoint he not only rejected Transubstantiation, but explained away the mysteries of the Atonement and Regeneration. He was strenuously opposed by St. Bernard, who regarded Abelard's heresies as the natural outcome of the unwise attempt of scholastic theology to buttress faith with logic. "Knowledge of the divine," Bernard declared,

"is the fruit of devotion rather than of disputation." "We know God only so far as we love God." This reaction against Scholasticism, however, was neither universal nor enduring. Hugo St. Victor, of Paris (d. 1141), among others, recognised that the principles of Anselm and Bernard were mutually supplementary, not exclusive. In the first half of the thirteenth century, moreover, the wide diffusion of Aristotle's works, after the Latin occupation of Constantinople, stimulated the defence and elaboration of dogma, by means of logic and philosophy, under the English Franciscan Hales, the "Irrefragable Doctor," and the German Dominican Albert the Great, "the Universal Doctor."

3. Bonaventura and Aquinas received their doctorate at Paris together in 1257. Friends in life, "in death they were not divided"; both died in 1274. (1) Bonaventura, called the "Seraphic Doctor" from his fervent *dévotion*, was Hales's most distinguished disciple, and (after 1256) head of the Franciscan Order. While adopting the scholastic method as a bulwark of faith, he also recognised the truth which Melanchthon afterwards embodied in the saying that "the heart makes the theologian." When once asked whence his learning proceeded, he pointed to a crucifix, to signify that the contemplation of Christ Crucified was the grand source of Christian knowledge. He was the first to use the now familiar phrase (descriptive of his own character), "sweetness and light." (2) The lustre of Bonaventura is eclipsed by that of his Dominican contemporary. In a famous picture at Pisa, Aquinas is the central figure on whose illuminated forehead are concentrated, in harmonious conjunction, rays of light, descending from God through Moses, the Evangelists, and St. Paul in the clouds above, and ascending from Plato and Aristotle stationed below. Thus is symbolised the great School-

man's life aim—to establish theology as a science on the basis of philosophy, and to show the essential concord of divine revelation with the ripest fruits of human reason. In his master work, whose colossal proportions and elaborate details furnish a striking parallel to the great cathedrals then being reared in Christendom, every truth of natural and revealed religion and morality is expounded with a long array of subtle distinctions, and fortified against every conceivable counter dogma with a massive rampart of symmetrical syllogisms. By Revelation Aquinas meant Scripture as interpreted by the Church; and in his theological temple a place is found not only for Catholic truth but for such Romish errors as papal supremacy, purgatory, transubstantiation, the withdrawal of the Cup from the laity,<sup>1</sup> the lawfulness of persecution, and the indulgence system. The discussion, also, of such questions as, whether God can do what He does not do, whether lost souls rejoice in the punishment of enemies, and whether two glorified bodies can occupy together the same space, gives point to Thomas Fuller's caustic criticism, that the Schoolmen "indulged in towering speculations, some of things mystical that might not, more of things difficult that could not, most of things curious that need not, be known." Aquinas was not only a doctor but a saint of the Church. His noble chastity in early youth, when his brothers infamously but vainly plied him with seductions to sensuality in order to arrest his career as a friar, became, in part, the ground of his canonisation in 1323. His devout spirit was attested by his habit of prayer over every perplexing question. A legend (founded

<sup>1</sup> This abuse, which began in the twelfth and became general in the thirteenth century, was defended on the ground (1) of the danger of desecration through the wine being spilt, (2) of both Body and Blood being received in each element.

probably on some fact) tells how once, when he was worshipping before a crucifix, a voice was heard, saying, "Thou hast written well of Me; what reward askest thou?" and the saint replied, "Lord, none but Thyself." Shortly before his death he declared that all his writings appeared to him now as mere refuse, compared with the glorious revelations of truth which he had received from God in a heavenly trance.

4. Scholasticism after Aquinas began to decline, even under the famous Franciscan, Duns Scotus (d. 1308), the "Subtle Doctor," whom Dunstane in England, Duns in Scotland, and Down in Ireland, have each claimed as an illustrious son. His frequent divergence from Aquinas (notably regarding the Virgin's immaculate conception, which Scotus affirmed and Aquinas denied) combined with the rivalry of the Dominican and Franciscan Orders to divide the world of scholars, during the fourteenth century, into Thomists and Scotists. In Scotus, however, the genuine scholastic confidence in the complete harmony between the dogmas of the Church and the dictates of reason is visibly qualified; and under the English Franciscan Ockham (d. 1349) the position was reached (through which the original purpose of Scholasticism was reversed), that what claims acceptance from the standpoint of reason may yet be rejected from the standpoint of ecclesiastical authority. Thenceforth scholastic theology ceased to be a power in Christendom. Rome began to realise that the Schoolmen were dangerous friends, if not disguised foes; while earnest minds, dissatisfied with the Church's doctrines, sought for enlightenment elsewhere than in the wisdom of the Schools.

5. Mission of Scholasticism.—Apart from its waste of strength on unimportant questions, the foundation of Scholasticism was unsound; its theology rested not on the pure truth of the Bible, but on the adulterated

truth of Revelation as interpreted by a fallible Church. The Scholastic method of theological architecture, moreover, was faulty. Scripture was handled not so much as an inspired volume of connected history, poetry prophecy, and practical morality, but rather as a vast arsenal of text-weapons for separate use in theological controversy. Nevertheless the Schoolmen fulfilled an important mission, and exerted a salutary influence. They were men, on the whole, of high aims, devout spirit, and blameless life. Amid widespread neglect of Holy Writ they recognised it as the chief fountain of religious knowledge. Amid general bondage to ecclesiastical tradition—a subjection in which they were themselves so far involved—they accustomed men to demand a reason for their faith, and thus prepared the way for emancipation from spiritual thrall. They set before Christendom the ideal of rational, as distinct from blind belief; and even while defending Romish errors, they were, by their bold discussions, forging and whetting the intellectual weapons with which those errors were eventually to be assailed.

## CHAPTER XXI

### COMMENCEMENT OF THE “BABYLONISH CAPTIVITY” (1305 A.D.)

WITH the fourteenth century begins the closing period of mediæval Christianity—the era of decay which witnessed papal humiliation and eventual infamy, the corruption of the new religious orders through which at first Christendom had been revived, and the growing alienation of culture, intelligence, and piety from the Catholic Church. It was also the era of preparation, when Wyclif, Hus, and Savonarola laboured and suffered, when reforming councils paved the way for more thorough reformation, and when, at length, the revival of learning and the invention of printing, by awakening keener inquiry and diffusing knowledge more widely, brought to a crisis the revolt against Rome.

1. **Papal humiliation and exile.**—In 1303, Pope Boniface VIII. was ignominiously seized and imprisoned by French troops at Anagni near Rome, on the eve of the day on which he was to have deposed Philip the Fair of France for disregarding a papal citation. The Pope had reasserted the pretensions of Hildebrand and Innocent III., declaring that “God had set the papacy over kings and kingdoms to destroy and to rebuild,” and that “subjection to the pontiff was necessary to salvation.” But to Boniface at once the genius and favourable

circumstances of his great predecessors were wanting. The spirit of nationality had grown stronger in Europe. France now resented papal intervention, and Philip the Fair could safely defy where Philip Augustus, a century earlier, would have been constrained to defer. He burned the papal bulls, and laid, with impunity, sacrilegious hands on the Pope's person. Out of this unsuccessful attempt by Boniface to enforce papal supremacy, there issued, after his death, the increase of French influence in the College of Cardinals, the election in 1305 of a French Pope (Clement V.) whose subserviency to Philip had been secretly pledged, and the commencement of the seventy years' papal exile or "Babylonish Captivity" at Avignon.

**2. Outcome of papal exile.**—(1) The Captivity was the first conspicuous stage in the decline of mediæval Christianity. During this period the papacy became, in great part, an appanage of France. A notable illustration of this subservience was the Pope's suppression, in 1311, of the order of Knights Templars,<sup>1</sup> at the French king's instigation. Blasphemies and immoralities were alleged against them and confessed under torture, but never properly proved. The real cause of condemnation was their immense wealth, which the French Crown at once confiscated. (2) The connection of the papacy with France naturally diminished the Pope's prestige and influence elsewhere. In Italy the prolonged absence of the papal court led to discontent and disloyalty. At Venice a nuncio was stoned. In Rome faction and anarchy prevailed, interrupted only by the two brief tribunates of the patriotic but vainglorious Rienzi (1347-48 and 1354). In Germany the normal attitude towards

<sup>1</sup> The Templars, who united monastic vows with military service, originated in 1118 as an order for the protection of pilgrims in Palestine. They received the name from their original abode on the site of the Temple at Jerusalem. At the time of their suppression, the headquarters of the order were in France.

the papacy was disaffection. Pope John XXII. (1316-34) who, under French influence, intrigued to transfer the imperial crown to the King of France, was disowned ; and in 1356 the old papal claim to confirm the election of the emperor was formally repudiated by the "Golden Bull" of Charles IV. In Scotland two papal excommunications of Robert Bruce (in 1307 and 1320) were ignored by prelates and people ; while in England, during the wars with France, the popes were naturally regarded as hostile, laws were passed against papal encroachments, and Edward III. ordered Roman legates out of the kingdom (3) The residence at Avignon led to increased papal extortion, and thus raised against the papacy fresh hostility. Unable to collect their Italian revenues, the popes maintained the luxury of their court by rapacity elsewhere. To this period belong the papal claims to the revenues of vacant sees and to property of deceased prelates ; the imposition of the annate, or deduction, for the pope, of a half-year's income from new incumbents : and the exaction of exorbitant fees for papal confirmation of appointments, which were thus virtually sold.

3. Anti-papal literature.—During this period the papacy was freely assailed. Ockham, under imperial protection, denied its claim not only to temporal supremacy but to all secular power, and questioned not merely the pope's spiritual infallibility, but the need of any pope at all. Our Lord's promises to St. Peter, he declared, applied only to the apostle himself. Dante (1265-1321), in a prose-writing, doubts the reality and denies the competency of Constantine's Donation (p. 86) ; in the *Inferno*<sup>1</sup> he deplores its pernicious effects. The nineteenth canto is a sustained invective against the rapacity,

<sup>1</sup> "Ah, Constantine ! of how much ill was cause,  
Not thy conversion, but those rich domains  
That the first wealthy Pope received of thee."—xix. 116

simony, and impiety of Church dignitaries. Two popes are consigned to hell ; and St. Peter inveighs sternly against "greedy wolves in sheep's clothing," who "range wide o'er all the pastures." Petrarch (1304-74), while demanding, as an Italian patriot, the pope's return to Rome, denounces the Holy See as a temple of heresy, describes Avignon (where he spent much of his life) as a drain of all the vices, and brands one pope as a drunkard, another as a profligate, a third as a fool. To this period also belongs the English Langland's *Vision of Piers the Plowman*, in which the sloth of priests and the loose morals of friars are assailed.

4. German Mysticism was the chief religious development during the papal exile. The Mystics reproduced St. Bernard's protest against Scholastic theology. Without either defending or assailing Roman doctrine, they sought to attain highest and purest religious knowledge through direct communion with God. Scholasticism climbed the heights of theology on the ladder of reason. Mysticism soared thither on the wings of devotion. The latter was stimulated not only by the decline of the former, but by the increasing formality of church services conducted by unspiritual men. Earnest souls were driven to satisfy their spiritual cravings in private religious exercises. The frequent interdicts, moreover, through which, during this period, whole cities, and for many years the entire empire, were deprived of regular public ordinances, at once incited mystic piety and provided a soil for its propagation. The most eminent mystic was Tauler of Strassburg, a Dominican friar, and the most impressive preacher of his time. Tauler avoided the one-sidedness of Mysticism by uniting with the devotion of passive contemplation the ardour of active charity. During the great plague of 1347, in spite of the interdict lying on Strassburg, he zealously ministered material

help and spiritual comfort to the citizens, of whom 16,000 perished. The Holy Communion was magnified by Tauler as the chosen channel of spiritual power ; but the communication of that power was held to depend not on outward observance but on inward faith and feeling. He emulated the most faithful monks in the encouragement of austerity ; not, however, for its own sake, but as a religious discipline. Luther confesses his obligations to Tauler's sermons as a storehouse of "fundamental and pure theology." They dwell not only on Christ's work *in* us, which the Mystics emphasised, but also on His work *for* us. This evangelical feature of Tauler's theology is symbolised in the pre-Reformation monument to his memory at Strassburg—the great preacher being significantly represented as pointing to the Lamb of God.

## CHAPTER XXII

“THE MORNING STAR OF THE REFORMATION,” JOHN  
WYCLIF (d. 1384 A.D.)

“IF Luther and Calvin,” writes D’Aubigné, “are the fathers of the Reformation, Wyclif is its grandfather.” He enunciated the main substance of Reformed doctrine more than a century before Luther was born.

1. Wyclif’s earlier career and assault on ecclesiastical abuses.—Wyclif was born about 1324 in Yorkshire, near the village whose name he bears. He received his higher education at Oxford, where we find him in 1360 already eminent as a Scholastic theologian of unsurpassed acuteness and an earnest expositor of the Word of God. Between 1361 and 1384, without severing his connection with the University, he was rector, successively, of Fylingham near Lincoln, Ludgershall in Bucks, and Lutterworth in Leicestershire. A pattern of pastoral fidelity, he realised and perhaps suggested the beautiful portrait, drawn by his contemporary Chaucer (in the *Canterbury Tales*), of the parish priest “rich of holy thought and work.” Wyclif’s career as a reformer embraces two distinct stages. In the first (1365-78) he protested only against practical abuses. Thus, in 1365, he took a leading part in resisting payment of the humiliating tribute imposed on England by Innocent

III. (see p. 123). In 1374 he accompanied John of Gaunt (son of Edward III.) to Bruges on a mission of remonstrance against papal encroachment and extortion. He boldly denounced, during this period, the papal annate, ecclesiastical interference in civil cases, and presentation by the Pope (often before a vacancy occurred) of foreign clergy to English benefices. He exposed, also, the greed and lax lives of priests and monks, advocating the withdrawal of religious endowments unworthily used.

2. **Wyclif's later protest against the Church's constitution, ritual, and doctrine.**—The second stage of his reforming career dates from 1378, when the "Babylonish Exile" was followed by the Papal Schism.<sup>1</sup> At first the reforming measures of Urban VI. enlisted Wyclif on his side. "Blessed be the Lord," he wrote, "who has given to His Church in Urban a Catholic Head, an evangelical man." Ere long, however, the unseemly anathemas hurled by each pope at the other's supporters led Wyclif to reconsider the whole subject of the papacy, and to reject as unscriptural and pernicious the papal claims to spiritual supremacy and temporal dominion. Eventually he denounced both rivals as "two halves of one Anti-christ." Prelacy, hitherto assailed by him only in the persons of its unworthy representatives, is now repudiated as a higher order, and recognised only as a superior office. Wyclif condemns the over-sensuous ritual of the Church as a "Judaising" departure from the spirituality of Christian worship; and while admitting the use of

<sup>1</sup> The papal court returned to Rome in 1377. A year later, the French majority in the College of Cardinals elected an Italian Pope, Urban VI.; but soon afterwards they declared the appointment invalid owing to alleged Roman intimidation, and elected a French ecclesiastic, Clement VII., who resided at Avignon. Hence arose the schism. Urban was acknowledged by Italy, Germany, England, Poland, and Scandinavia; Clement by France, Scotland, Spain, and Lorraine.

images to "wake up mind and heart to heavenly things," he rejects image-adoration. In the sphere of doctrine there is a residuum of Romish error even in his later writings; especially noteworthy is his belief in Purgatory. But the sole mediation of Christ is asserted; invocation of saints is rejected; the Virgin, of whom he formerly declared that "all men needed her," is now simply commended as an example. He regards the "whole body of the elect" as the true Church, and designates the outward ecclesiastical organisation as the "mixed Church." Confession, if "made to good priests," is useful, but "not so needful" as confession to God. Priestly absolution is simply declaratory; "God alone absolveth"; and Luther's attack on indulgences is anticipated. Compulsory celibacy Wyclif regards as contrary to Scripture and prejudicial to morality. He speaks of "Seven Sacraments," but places Baptism and Holy Communion on a higher level than the rest. Ordination is not indelible; extreme unction has no Scriptural basis. Transubstantiation is emphatically rejected; the sacred elements become spiritually not corporeally, virtually not actually, the body and blood of Christ. Obviously, Wyclif's creed is a near approach to Protestant belief.

**3. Wyclif's English Bible and "Poor Priests."**—(1) Amid controversy Wyclif reached the firm conviction that the Word of God is the sole ultimate authority, and that only through its free circulation could evangelical truth displace Romish error. His translation of the Bible into English occupied much of his later life. A clerical adversary (Knighton) thus magnifies, while decrying, the work: "Master John Wyclif has laid the Gospel more open to the laity and to women who can read than it was formerly to the most learned clergy. Thus is the Gospel pearl cast abroad and trodden under

foot of swine." (2) Wyclif's other great evangelistic agency was his company of itinerant preachers, called "Poor Priests," although latterly laymen also were employed. The general object of this institution resembled that of the Mendicants, viz. to supplement the defective ministry of the parish clergy. The "Poor Priests" lived, like the friars, on Christian alms, but preached evangelical doctrine based entirely on Holy Writ. Personally trained by Wyclif himself, they travelled about barefoot, in long gowns of coarse cloth, preaching in church or churchyard when permitted, and also at market or fair. Their success is attested by Primate Courtenay, who deplores their seductive power; and Knighton writes, with some exaggeration doubtless, that through their labours "every other man in England was a Lollard."<sup>1</sup>

4. Ecclesiastical hostility against Wyclif.—Wyclif's warfare against abuses could not but arouse antagonism. Courtenay brought him under papal censure, and cited him, in 1377, before a council in London; but John of Gaunt's patronage, popular favour, and academic support combined in his defence. In the later period of his career he encountered the hostility not only of the prelates but of the University authorities, whom his attack upon Church doctrine alarmed, and also of the Mendicants, whose demoralising absolution he denounced. About 1379, when Wyclif lay apparently on his deathbed at Oxford, four Mendicant doctors pressed into the sick-room and besought him to retract his errors and his charges against their Orders. "I shall not die, but

<sup>1</sup> The name Lollard, given to Wyclif's followers, is from a Dutch word meaning Psalm-singer, and was originally applied in the Netherlands to various minor fraternities of alleged schismatic or heretical character. After Wyclif's time the Lollards included, along with his genuine disciples, many whose views derived no sanction from the reformer's writings.

live," exclaimed Wyclif, roused from lethargy, "and will declare the evil deeds of the friars." In 1381 his doctrines were interdicted at Oxford, and widespread prejudice arose against him through Wat Tyler's revolt being unfairly ascribed to his influence. In 1382 his writings were condemned by a convention of bishops and Mendicant doctors—an alliance of jealous rivals sarcastically compared by Wyclif to the reconciliation of Herod and Pilate. The House of Lords endorsed the condemnation, and sentenced to imprisonment all propagators of Wyclifite views. Many of the reformer's followers were driven into exile or recanted; but Wyclif himself, owing to influential friends and the reforming spirit of the Commons, escaped actual persecution, and continued in Lutterworth to preach reformed doctrine, to superintend his "Poor Priests," and to issue anti-Romish treatises, until his death in 1384.

5. Wyclif's Reforming influence.—In Wyclif almost all earlier reforming forces were concentrated. As the "Evangelical Doctor" he represented the preparatory discipline of Scholasticism evangelically directed. As the opponent of the papacy he stimulated the rising revolt which the "Babylonish Captivity" had fostered. As the denouncer of ecclesiastical corruption, he forcibly reaffirmed what earlier moral reformers—papal, episcopal, monastic—had already emphasised. In his "Poor Priests" were reproduced the apostolic simplicity and home-mission zeal of Waldo and St. Francis. As translator of the Bible and upholder of its supreme authority, he adopted the Waldensian Scriptural standpoint, fortified it with learning and logic, and enabled men more fully to judge for themselves how far the Church and her creed harmonised with the spirit and teaching of Christ. In England Wyclif's reforming influence was wide and deep. His connection with the

Court won men of high rank to the cause ; Richard II.'s queen, Anne of Bohemia, embraced his views. Through his academic reputation his writings circulated among men of culture, while his itinerant evangelists and popular tracts sowed seeds of truth in the minds of the common people, and prepared a soil for later spiritual husbandmen. Above all, his English Bible became a continuous witness for truth and a source of Lollardism down to the Reformation. Wyclif, however, belongs not to England only, but to Christendom. Not to speak of Scotland, where, in 1407, his follower Resby became her Protestant protomartyr, his influence on the subsequent Bohemian reform movement is amply attested. Bohemian students sat at his feet, and Hus acknowledged that his eyes had been opened by Wyclif's writings. The Husite Church, in turn, with its martyrdoms and conflicts, kept reformed doctrine before Christendom throughout the fifteenth century, and gave strong moral support to the Lutheran cause ; so that, although Luther himself, imperfectly informed, deprecated Wyclif as a hair-splitter and an assailant merely of outward abuses, the success of German Protestantism is partly due to the English reformer. The Council of Constance testified to Wyclif's potent influence when, more than thirty years after his death, it branded his writings as heretical and ordered his bones to be burned. The ashes were cast into the river Swift, and what was meant to be an emblem of reprobation became a symbol of triumph. For "the brook Swift" (as Thomas Fuller, the Church historian in the seventeenth century, writes) "did carry his ashes into the Avon, the Avon into the Severn, the Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean ; and thus the ashes of Wyclif are emblems of his doctrine, which is now diffused over all the world."

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE (1414-1418 A.D.)

CONSTANCE was distinguished during the Middle Ages as a free and flourishing imperial city, as the seat of a vast bishopric with 1700 parishes, and as the scene, in 1474, of the treaty which secured Swiss independence. It was celebrated most of all as the meeting-place of a memorable Council which exhibited in singular combination the reforming and the anti-reforming tendencies of the age.

1. The Occasion of the Council was the triple object of restoring the Church's unity, accomplishing its reformation, and protecting its orthodoxy. (1) Seventy years of papal exile had been succeeded by forty years of schism, during which popes anathematised each other and sundered Christendom. Negotiations between representatives of the rival parties were rendered fruitless by the obstinacy and guile of the rival pontiffs ; at length, in 1409, a council at Pisa deposed both popes of the time for schism, contumacy, and perjury. A new pope was appointed who died within a year ; and his successor, John XXIII., so scandalised the Church by his depravity that the claims of the two deposed pontiffs were revived. To terminate this aggravated schism, John reluctantly united with the Emperor Sigismund in calling the

Council of Constance. (2) Sigismund and his ecclesiastical advisers had further objects in view. During the schism, when two pontifical courts were maintained, papal exactions had been doubled ; papal simony in presentations and dispensations had become more flagrant ; the corruption of Church and clergy had increased ; and all earnest men realised the pressing need of the Church's "reformation in head and members." (3) Bohemia had become a hot-bed of so-called heresy through the influence of Hus (1369-1415), Rector of Prague University, and of his gifted follower Jerome. Hus had not only denounced papal abuses and clerical vices, but had adopted Wyclif's two doctrines, that Holy Writ is the sole ultimate rule of faith, and that the elect are the only true church. From the former doctrine he deduced the invalidity of papal decrees not in accord with the revealed mind of Christ ; from the latter, the nullity of all clerical authority exercised by men guilty of mortal sin. In one main point Hus differed from Wyclif : he accepted transubstantiation. In 1409 the Pope forbade Hus to preach, and in 1411 excommunicated him for disregard of the interdict. As in Wyclif's case, the University, which at first supported Hus, afterwards deserted him ; but many Bohemian nobles and the majority of the people adhered to his cause. He had repeatedly appealed from Pope to Council. Sigismund now took him at his word, and summoned him to Constance to vindicate his doctrine.

2. **Attendance.**—The Council included 300 prelates and as many doctors, with over 200 princes, nobles, royal ambassadors, and delegates of cities ; the membership represented almost every nation, court, and university of Western Christendom. Along with these dignitaries were 1800 priests and 2400 knights ; the total number of strangers in the city sometimes exceeded 50,000.

Doctors and lay magnates, as well as bishops and abbots, were allowed to vote ; and, to prevent the Italians, who were most numerous, from exerting undue power, the usage of voting by nations was borrowed from the universities. The most influential leaders were two Frenchmen, D'Ailly, Archbishop of Cambray, and Gerson, Chancellor of the University of Paris, who united anxiety to reform the Church's practice with their determination to conserve unaltered the Church's doctrine.<sup>1</sup>

**3. Procedure.**—(1) The Council restored the Church's unity by confirming the deposition of two popes at Pisa, and by deposing its own papal president for flagrant wickedness. John had entered Constance with an immense retinue and rich treasure, borne by 1600 horses ; he left the city a solitary fugitive from anticipated condemnation. A conclave, nominated by the Council, afterwards elected Pope Martin V. (2) Against papal supremacy the Council emphatically asserted its own superior authority. It did so in act, when it deposed a legally-appointed pope ; in word, when it expressly declared that a General Council derives its power direct from Christ, and that its decrees are binding on all, popes included. (3) A programme of reforms was drawn up dealing with papal extortion, indulgence, and abuse of patronage, with simony, pluralities, and non-residence, with monastic and clerical corruption. Unfortunately, the new pope was elected before any decrees relating to those evils were passed ; and Martin, although a man of unimpeachable character, was too much under Italian influence to be a genuine reformer. He contrived to

<sup>1</sup> D'Ailly, the "Hammer of heretics," had championed the Virgin's immaculate conception. A writing of his suggested to Columbus the western route to India. Gerson united the scholastic and mystic tendencies. He is regarded as the founder of "Gallicanism," which recognises the Pope as head of Christendom, but *withstands his interference with the internal affairs of national churches*.

have most of the proposed reforms postponed. A beginning, however, was made. Several decrees, dealing with simony and immorality, were passed, and clerical offenders received warning that Christendom had awakened from its lethargy. (4) So far, the Council's policy was progressive; but, as regards doctrine, it was fatally retrograde. The same men, led by D'Ailly and Gerson, who protested against practical scandals, were blind to the root of these, the Church's lapse from Scriptural truth, and became rigorous persecutors of doctrinal reformers. Hus came to the Council relying on a written safe-conduct from the Emperor; four weeks after his arrival he was immured in a dungeon. Sigismund's indignant protest was first silenced with the plea that faith need not be kept with heretics, and was eventually changed into active participation in the Council's sentence of Hus to the stake<sup>1</sup> (1415). The reformer met the demand for submissive recantation with a counter-demand for Scriptural refutation; he refused, also, to "abjure" (and thus, as he considered, to own that he had previously held) doctrines which were misleading distortions of his real views. "Lord Jesus, for Thy sake I endure this cruel death; I beseech Thee to pardon my enemies," was his prayer at the stake; and the last sound that came from his lips was a psalm of praise. A year later Jerome, after retracting a temporary recantation, shared the glory of martyrdom. Both reformers suffered during the papal vacancy.

4. Issue.—The direct outcome of the Council came miserably short of its avowed objects. The papal schism was healed; but the graver evils of simony and lax morality were only slightly repressed; the papacy speedily threw off its dependence on the Council; and the burning

<sup>1</sup> On one occasion, when Hus referred during his trial to the safe conduct, Sigismund visibly blushed.

of Hus and Jerome, instead of annihilating, propagated heresy, and led (1420) to a protracted religious war in Bohemia. The indirect issue, however, was none the less critical. It was shown that the papacy, even when the pope was personally respectable, had become too deeply saturated with corruption to take any effective part in Church reform. It was proved, also, that the reforming policy of men like D'Ailly and Gerson was utterly inadequate; that they were as unbending champions of mediæval dogmas as any Dominican inquisitor; and that their procedure only substituted prelatical for papal despotism. Out of the Church's experience at Constance was gradually developed the conviction, to which Luther gave emphatic expression, that thorough reformation was attainable only through the rejection alike of Papacy and Council as the supreme authority in religion.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Another attempt at reform through a Council was made at Bâle (1431-49), but the attendance was limited; the authority of the Council was disputed; and thus the reforming measures, although more thorough, were ineffective. Moderate Husites were conciliated by the restoration of the Communion Cup to the laity—a reform exalted, after Hus's death, into a cardinal principle. The papacy afterwards disowned the concession.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### CLOS OF THE MIDDLE AGES ; APPROACH OF THE REFORMATION

THE latter half of the fifteenth century may be regarded as the eve before the day of modern Christianity—that day of which the Reformation epoch is the dawn. The records of those fifty years have an important bearing both on the great ecclesiastical event which impended and on the condition of modern Christendom.

1. The Capture of Constantinople by Mahomet II., in 1453, gave to Islam and to the Turks a position in Europe which is retained, although in greatly diminished strength, to this day, and which, until recent times, effectually excluded Christian influence from Western Asia. After the fall of the Greek Empire, Moscow became the real capital of Eastern Christendom ; and the long-neglected opportunity of the Greek Church for missionary reconquest in Asia, from Constantinople as base of operations, passed away—perhaps to be renewed, amid spiritual revival, when the city shall have been restored to Christendom. On the other hand, the fall of Constantinople helped to hasten the Reformation. It shattered the prospect, which during the earlier half of the fifteenth century had become brighter, of reunion between the Greek and Latin Churches. The hope of

such an event rested on the readiness of later Greek emperors to purchase by ecclesiastical concession such an alliance with Rome as might save their empire from Turkish conquest. When the Empire fell, the prospect of reunion disappeared along with the motive for Greek complaisance ; and in the eyes of reformers, who might have shrunk from creating a new schism while the old was being healed, one reason for avoiding rupture with Rome was withdrawn. More directly, the Turkish occupation of Constantinople furthered the Reform movement by driving Greek scholars and scholarship to the West. A potent instrument was thus supplied for that revival of learning which brought Romish errors and pretensions to the bar of early Church history and of original Scripture. This mission of the "New Learning" culminated under Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466-1536), who taught and wrote in Paris, Oxford, Cambridge, Louvain, and Bâle. His contemporaries embodied his services to the Reformation in the saying, "Erasmus laid the egg which Luther hatched."

**2. Introduction of Printing.**—When, where, and by whom printing was invented and introduced into Europe, is matter of controversy ; but from the printing of Gutenberg's Bible, at Mayence, in 1455, may be dated the development of the discovery into an important art, which accelerated the Reformation, and opened up for the Church of modern times her pathway of power. The price of books sank at once to one-fifth of their former cost ; their circulation increased a hundred or a thousand fold. Long before the close of the fifteenth century the Bible, a complete copy of which was formerly a luxury, had already far advanced on its triumphant career of universal and many-tongued diffusion. Thus Luther's appeal to the Word of God as the Rule of faith and practice reached not merely the classes but the masses. Through

the printing-press, also, every protest raised against Rome was indefinitely multiplied ; trenchant exposures of religious abuses and polemical treatises against Romish doctrines were transmitted to circles hitherto inaccessible. The *Praise of Folly*, in which Erasmus assailed clerical vice and ecclesiastical superstition, went through twenty-seven editions in less than as many years ; and earlier reforming tracts, written in vernacular tongues and in clear, terse style, penetrated to almost every hamlet where any one was able to read. "We must root out printing," said an English priest, soon after its introduction into his country, "or printing will root out us."

**3. Papal Infamy.**—The papacy sank, during this period, to a level as low as that of the tenth century. A brief interval, indeed, of external lustre had preceded the degradation. Martin V. (1417-31), although a non-reforming pope, was an able ruler of the Roman States. His successor Eugenius IV. (1431-47), while also a reactionary, almost accomplished the reunion of Eastern and Western Christendom. The next three popes, Nicolas V., Calixtus III., and Pius II., if not distinguished for religious earnestness, made a spirited attempt, which failed through the lukewarmness of European potentates, to recover Constantinople for Christendom. Nicolas, moreover, was a liberal patron of learning and art ; he appointed as his secretary Laurence Valla, who exposed the forgery of Constantine's Donation (p. 86), and he drew to Rome the sculptor Donatello and the painter Angelico, forerunners of Michael Angelo and Raphael. But, from 1471 to the close of the century, the papal chair was filled in succession by a trio of base and bloodthirsty profligates ; the last and worst being the notorious Alexander Borgia, who united the infamy of the persecutor, the plunderer, the assassin, and the debauchee. Under such popes, through

whom the papacy became an object of loathing to earnest and even to worldly men, the generation grew up by whom the Reformation was consummated.

4. **The Brethren of the Common Life.**—To this brotherhood an honourable place belongs among the quieter forces which, during this period, operated in the direction of reform, within limited yet influential circles. A semi-monastic society, without monastic vow or rigid rule, the Brotherhood had been founded near the close of the fourteenth century, but now attained its greatest influence. Its seminaries at Deventer, Zwoll, and elsewhere in the Netherlands and North Germany, attended by about 1200 students, introduced into the service of the Church many whose Bible knowledge and deep piety contrasted with the ignorance and laxity of the clergy as a whole. From this society, moreover, issued, about 1470, the famous *Imitation of Christ*, by Thomas à Kempis, which went through eighty editions before the Reformation, and has probably been oftener reprinted and translated than any other book save the Bible. This “rose in the cloister garden of the Brethren of the Common Life” dwells with one-sided exclusiveness, indeed, on self-purification and religious self-culture, in dependence upon divine grace; and, while setting before mankind, with deep spiritual insight, the image of the holy Jesus whose will was in constant and perfect harmony with God’s will, it almost ignores that other side of the Master’s likeness embodied in the testimony, “He went about doing good.” But in an age when religion was widely identified with mere outward observance, the faithful inculcation of personal religion by à Kempis was a conspicuous testimony to neglected truth which the Reformation restored to prominence; and the “Imitation” continues, after more than four centuries, to meet in a unique manner the

deeper wants of all who are striving after holiness and humility, after the mortification of the carnal and the edification of the spiritual self.

5. **Immediate Forerunners of the Reformation.**—(1) Three Teutonic contemporaries, all with the name John, bore witness during this period to what afterwards became known as Reformed doctrine. John of Goch (near Cleves) lived unmolested in retirement, but left behind him at his death (1475) a work which anticipates Luther's view of justification, disowns the spiritual efficacy of mere outward observance, and maintains the exclusive authority of Holy Writ. John of Wesel (on the Rhine) preached openly at Worms what John of Goch had taught more privately at Mechlin. His writings were burned as heretical, and he escaped martyrdom in 1479 only through explanations which were accepted as retractions. John Wessel of Gröningen (1420-89) held similar views, forestalled Calvin's revival of the doctrine regarding Christ's spiritual presence in the Communion, and was rescued from persecution only through the powerful patronage of the Archbishop of Utrecht. "If I had read Wessel's works earlier," said Luther, "my enemies might have thought that I derived everything from them; so entirely we agree in spirit."

(2) More notable and influential was the Dominican friar Savonarola (1452-98), the prophet, statesman, and martyr of Florence. From 1489 onwards, vast crowds thronged the great cathedral to hear the preacher deliver himself like a Hebrew seer of his "burden of woe" against Florentine sensuality, selfish luxury, and practical paganism. "Your sins have made me a prophet," he once exclaimed; and eventually he had the prophet's joy of witnessing in the city a great religious revival and moral reformation. Contention gave place to amity; restitution was made by the spoiler and the defrauder;

luxury went for a time out of fashion ; wealth was devoted to the poor ; licentiousness ceased to flaunt its shame and was constrained to hide its head. Even over the Carnival of Florence Savonarola laid his spell : he replaced its ribald rhymes with sacred songs, and transformed its riotous excesses into an enthusiasm of devotion which culminated in the voluntary destruction of cards and dice, masks and cosmetics, immoral books and pictures in one vast "Bonfire of Vanities." In an evil hour he became, from patriotic motives, a politician as well as a reformer. For two years all went prosperously. The government of the city was a virtual theocracy with Savonarola as its Moses or pope, and the laws passed by the Senate and endorsed by the popular Council were little more than echoes of sermons preached in the cathedral. Enemies, however, began to rise on many sides—political opponents of the man who had humbled their several factions, social adversaries who chafed at the Puritanism enforced on the citizenship, and ecclesiastical rivals jealous of the power and popularity of the friar whose piety rebuked their own degenerate lives. Pope Alexander VI. saw in him not only a stern reprobate of papal vice, but a stumbling-block in the way of Italian political unity, for which Savonarola would not sacrifice Florentine religious reformation. Alexander tried first to bribe him with a cardinal's hat, then to silence him with a papal ban ; but in vain. Eventually, advantage was taken of a temporary loss of popularity, caused by Savonarola being craftily represented as evading a Franciscan's challenge to the ordeal of fire ; and the reformer was arrested and thrown into prison. On the ground of an alleged claim to prophetic inspiration, and of a so-called confession which disavowed the claim—a confession constructed out of answers given to astute inquisitors amid maddening torture—Savonarola was con-

victed of religious imposture as well as of rebellion against the Holy See, and condemned to the gibbet and the stake. Relying, rather unduly, on a treatise composed by the reformer in prison, Luther declares that "although the feet of this holy man are soiled with some theological mud, nevertheless he maintained justification by faith only, without works." But Savonarola, although he denounced Alexander VI. for his wickedness, and was driven amid conflict to adopt the view of Hus, that ecclesiastical authority is forfeited through spiritual apostasy, never actually renounced either the communion or the creed of Rome. A few years after his death, Pope Julius II. ordered Raphael to insert his likeness in a famous fresco among the doctors of the Church ; and the Dominican Order, faithful to its friar, subsequently advocated (unsuccessfully) his claims to canonisation. None the less, the great spiritual movement inaugurated by Savonarola in Florence and extended elsewhere through his disciples and writings, was one of the leading forces which at this critical period stimulated religious aspirations and hastened the Reformation.

## CHAPTER XXV

### INAUGURATION OF THE REFORMATION BY LUTHER (1517-1521 A.D.)

ON the bronze door of the Castle Church of Wittenberg is a long Latin inscription which no Protestant can contemplate without deep interest. It consists of the memorable theses regarding indulgence which were affixed by Luther to the old wooden door of the church on the 31st October 1517. Tradition represents Frederick, Elector of Saxony, as having dreamed on the previous night that he saw a monk writing on that very church in characters large enough to be read by the Elector at Schweinitz six leagues off, and with a pen which appeared to reach as far as Rome and to loosen the papal crown. The story cannot be traced back beyond 1591, and is probably a legend; but it embodies pictorially the fact that the publication of Luther's ninety-five theses was the raising of a standard whose scroll was read by Christendom, and the inauguration of the great movement which shook the foundations of papal Rome.

1. **Luther before 1517.**—The root of Luther's ecclesiastical activity was his spiritual experience. In 1505, when he was twenty-two years of age, the sudden death of a friend, followed by perilous exposure to a thunder-

storm, awakened his sense of sin, and drove him from the law class-room at Erfurt to the Augustinian monastery. There, after many self-mortifications, the timely words of an old friar, the influence of Staupitz, Vicar-General of the Order (a mystic of Tauler's school), and, above all, the careful study of Holy Writ, enabled Luther to realise the spiritual peace which flows, not from penance and priestly absolution, but from simple faith in the free, forgiving grace of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. In 1511, when he had become a theological professor at Wittenberg, he visited Rome. "Hail, Holy Rome! thrice holy for the blood of the martyrs shed there," he exclaimed, as he came in sight of the city; and, like many a Protestant as well as Romanist, he felt his devotion grow warmer amid sacred scenes and memorials. Yet, even while he ascended on bended knees the Holy Stairs which (as was then universally believed) the Saviour's feet had trodden in Pilate's Judgment Hall, the thought forced itself on his conscience that not by such works can men be justified or sanctified, but that "the just shall live by *faith*." He was shocked, moreover, by the secularity of the Pope (Julius II.) and of his Court, as well as by the levity, licentiousness, and even infidelity common among the priesthood; and he returned home with the impression that "Rome, once the holiest, was now the worst of cities." His faith in Romanism as an ecclesiastical system remained; but his sentimental enthusiasm for the existing Roman Church was gone. Meanwhile he preached and taught to sympathetic audiences the evangelical truths which had become precious to his own soul. As yet, however, there was no open rupture with Rome.

2. **The Wittenberg Theses.**—Luther's ecclesiastical reserve terminated in 1517 on the advent of Tetzel, a

Dominican preacher and papal agent, who was raising money for the new St. Peter's Church. Tetzel's scandalous sale of papal pardons without proper explanation of the need of repentance as a condition of absolution, and the purchase of these indulgences by multitudes under the impression that they were obtaining passports to heaven, roused the indignation of one who had found the true and only pathway to pardon and peace. "God willing, I will beat a hole in his (Tetzel's) drum," Luther exclaimed. The threat was fulfilled when he nailed to the church door those theses in which he lays down the position that "the Pope can only remit penalties imposed by himself or by a canon of the Church," and that "every Christian who feels true compunction has of right plenary remission of pain and guilt, without letter of pardon, in virtue of the benefit of Christ given to Christians by God Himself."

**3. From Wittenberg to Worms.**—At the outset his theses brought Luther into conflict with Tetzel only, not with Rome. Pope Leo X. refused at first to take action. "Friar Martin is a man of fine genius," he said; and the outcry about him he characterised as "a squabble of envious monks." Luther, moreover, had accused not the Pope but his representatives of errors which he believed that Leo himself would not endorse. In August 1518, however, the Pontiff was persuaded to alter his attitude. Luther was branded as a heretic and cited to Augsburg, where he met the papal legate, Cajetanus. In vain the Reformer proposed discussion on the basis of Scripture. In vain he appealed from the Pope ill-informed to the Pope well-informed. Cajetanus, in Leo's name, demanded immediate retraction; and so Luther was constrained to appeal from the Pope to a General Council. He thus ceased to be a high papist; not, however, to be a Romanist. He was now on the platform of the Council

of Constance. Next year, in a disputation at Leipsic between Luther and Eck, an eminent Bavarian doctor, the former was constrained either to condemn Hus, or to disown the authority by which Hus had been condemned. He must either recede or advance. He chose the latter alternative, repudiated the supreme authority of councils, fell back upon Holy Writ as the sole ultimate standard of truth, and thus ceased to be a Romanist. Meanwhile he had added to his assault upon indulgences a protest against transubstantiation, and against the compulsory celibacy as well as exclusive priesthood of the clergy. One more stage remained before the breach with Rome became complete. Would Luther deliberately adhere to his heresies? A papal bull threatened a papal ban unless, within sixty days, he repented and retracted. Instead of recantation he publicly burnt the bull in token of defiance of the Pope, and also a copy of Canon Law, in token of his renunciation of the Roman Church. Thus the Rubicon was crossed. At Worms, in 1521, an opportunity of recrossing was afforded. Luther was summoned to an Imperial Diet, and no friendly warnings prevented his attendance. "I am resolved to enter Worms," he said, "although as many devils should set at me as there are tiles on the house-tops." Before a brilliant assembly of princes and nobles, prelates and doctors, presided over by the youthful Emperor Charles V., Luther replied to a demand for recantation in the memorable words: "Unless I am convinced by Scripture and reason, I cannot, dare not retract anything. Here I take my stand: I can do no otherwise: so help me God." The imperial was now added to the papal ban; and Luther was secretly transported for safety to the Wartburg in Thuringia. There he remained for a year in disguise, occupied with the translation of the Bible into popular German. Thenceforth, until his death in

1546, Luther, along with the younger, gentler, more learned, but less heroic Melanchthon, guided the course of German Protestantism amid external opposition and internal controversy ; while, directly or indirectly, he also stimulated the progress of the Reformation throughout Christendom.

**4. Luther's influence beyond Germany.**—The Protest at Worms passed down the Rhine to the Netherlands, and it is notable that the two earliest Flemish reformers and martyrs were friars of Luther's order. Polish and Hungarian students carried home from Wittenberg the principles of the Reformation ; there, also, Taussen, the "Danish Luther," and the two Petersons, who inaugurated the movement in Sweden, had sat at the Reformer's feet. So early as 1520, Spaniards were reading a work of Luther in their own tongue ; before long, a Lutheran congregation was founded in Seville. A war in 1526 between the Emperor and Pope Clement VII. brought into Italy Lutheran soldiers who left Protestant writings behind them ; and Clement deplores the prevalence of "Luther's pestiferous heresy." Patrick Hamilton, who was burnt at St. Andrews in 1528, as well as Frith and Tyndale, the English reformers, who suffered martyrdom a few years later, had lived in Germany and come there under Lutheran influence. In France the circulation of Luther's writings had become, in 1521, so large, that the University of Paris formally condemned him along with its own venerable teacher Le Fevre, the "Father of the French Reformation."

**5. The Contemporary Swiss Reformation had an independent origin.** In 1517, while Luther was denouncing the sale of indulgences, Zwingli (1484-1531) was assailing the parallel abuse of the remission of sins through pilgrimage to a shrine of the Virgin at Einsiedeln. Early in 1519 he declared from his pulpit in Zurich that

he would preach from "Scripture in the light of Scripture independent of all ecclesiastical tradition." In 1522 he finally broke with Rome on the subject of compulsory fasting and celibacy. Next year the Swiss Reformation was formally inaugurated at Zurich, after a disputation in which the Reformer was supported by the magistracy and citizenship. He took his stand on the triple protestation that Christ is the only High Priest and Mediator, to the exclusion of sacerdotal pretensions and saintly intercessions ; that the death of Christ is the only offering for sin, to the exclusion of the sacrifice of the Mass ; and that the Word of God is the only standard of religious truth, to the exclusion of ecclesiastical authority. Zurich became the centre of a reforming movement which soon included the larger half of German Switzerland.

6. The General Principles of the Reformation included (1) *Scriptural Religion*. The Church of Rome had dethroned Scripture from its supremacy, and virtually withheld the vernacular Bible from Christendom. The Reformers restored the Word of God to its rightful position in the determination of the Church's doctrine, in the regulation of her practice, in the teaching of her clergy, in the homes of her people. (2) *Rational Religion*. Romanism had introduced irrational doctrines like transubstantiation into the Church's creed, preposterous pretensions like papal indulgence into her discipline, superstitious usages like image-worship into her ritual. Her reformers, while duly subordinating reason to revelation, recognised the former as a divine gift, and demanded a creed, a discipline, and a worship which should not outrage man's rational nature. (3) *Personal Religion*. Rome practically discouraged the direct and personal access of the soul to God. Between the human mind and revealed truth, pope and council interposed

their authority. Between the sin-burdened soul and divine forgiveness the priest intervened with so-called absolution. Between the devout spirit and the throne of grace, Virgin and saints were made to interject their needless mediation. The Reformers swept away all such barriers, declared the right of private judgment, proclaimed a universal Christian priesthood, and, without undervaluing the Church's councils, ministry, and ordinances, emphasised the personal responsibility of each individual to God, and the direct relation of each soul to Christ, the source of human salvation. (4) *Spiritual Religion.* Romanism, through multiplied outward ordinances and ceremonies imposed on the Church, had obscured the spirituality of the Christian religion. The Reformers, here entering into the mission of the Mystics, emphasised inward religious experience as contrasted with external ecclesiastical observance. They magnified penitence as compared with penance, the faith which worketh as distinguished from outward works themselves, self-denial and chastity as distinct from asceticism and celibacy, spiritual communion as contrasted with mere attendance at mass. (5) *National Religion* was repressed by Romanism, which aimed at the complete subjection of the Church of each nation to an ecclesiastical hierarchy subservient to Rome. The Reformers developed the protest, already frequent, against papal intervention into the principle of national religious independence—the principle that the Church of each nation, while a part of Catholic Christendom, had a right to determine the details of its own ecclesiastical discipline, ritual, and even creed ; and further, that not to any hierarchy alone, but to the Christian people, lay as well as clerical, acting through their authorised representatives belongs the government of the Church.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In carrying out these principles different Churches arrived

**7. The Reformation and earlier reforming movements.**—The Reformation was not more a revolution than an evolution for which, as we have seen, the way had long been prepared ; and scarcely any particular of reformed doctrine and discipline had not been repeatedly anticipated ; but this great distinction remains, that while earlier reformers testified against errors and abuses in the Church, those of the sixteenth century reconstituted the Church itself, or at least a large portion of it, on a fresh basis. Waldo, Wyclif, Hus, and others went far on the way which Luther traversed, but they achieved no more than the formation of a reformed party or evangelical secession, to which large numbers were attracted, but which left Rome in the possession of the prestige and power of the Catholic Church. The Reformation, on the other hand, which Luther inaugurated embraced not merely individuals and parties but nations and national Church organisations ; so that, when the ecclesiastical struggle closed, the Reformed community could claim to be *the* Church in North Germany, England, Scotland, Holland, Scandinavia, with the majority of the Swiss cantons ; and the Reformed Church as a whole, became entitled, equally with the Roman, to share the name of Catholic Christendom.

different results as regards details ; but Reformed Christendom as a whole accepted the decrees of Nicæa and Chalcedon, the Augustinian representation of the necessity of inward grace, and the evangelical doctrine of Justification by faith ; while it rejected Papal authority and exclusive Priesthood ; Mariolatry, Saint-worship, and Image-adoration ; Transubstantiation, the Sacrifice of the Mass, the withholding of the Cup from the laity, and all but two Sacraments ; Indulgence, Purgatory, and Prayers for the deliverance of the dead therefrom ; Monasticism, compulsory Celibacy, obligatory Confession, and the use of Latin in public worship.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### REFORMED AND ROMAN CATHOLIC CHRISTENDOM AT THE DATE OF CALVIN'S DEATH (1564 A.D.)

IN the summer of 1536 a young French Protestant arrived at Geneva to pass the night ; he remained there, except during three years of exile, for the rest of his life. It was John Calvin, the Aquinas of the Reformation, already distinguished as the author of the leading theological work of the time. Four years previously, through the ministry of Farel, also a Frenchman, Geneva had accepted the Reformed Faith. Farel heard of his countryman's arrival, and bade him in God's name remain in Geneva and take part in building up its church. In vain Calvin, then only twenty-seven years of age, pleaded youth and inexperience, habits of study and distaste for public life. Farel threatened him with God's curse if he shrank from God's work. The timid scholar was overawed. He "felt as if God from on high had stretched out His hand," and he entered on a twenty-five years' ministry which developed into a spiritual dictatorship. Under Calvin, Geneva became not merely the citadel of Swiss Protestantism but the metropolis of Reformed Christendom. Thither, out of every country in Europe, came refugees from Romish persecution or inquirers after Protestant truth (John Knox among many others), and

found at once a secure retreat, a spiritual master, and what seemed an ideal Church. Thence they carried home and propagated the Genevan theology, ritual, and Church polity—Calvin's severe doctrine of predestination which in his case rested on submission, sublime in its complete self-abnegation, to the divine sovereignty; his view of Christ's spiritual Presence in the consecrated bread and wine, avoiding at once Zwingli's superficial idea of mere symbolical, and the superstitious dogma of corporeal, presence; his mode of church worship, substituting simplicity for pomp, appealing to mind rather than senses, and combining liturgical order with freedom; his doctrine of the essential equality of ministers, based on the identity of bishop and presbyter in the New Testament; his admission of laymen to a share in Church government by the institution of seniors or lay-elders; and the combination, in his ecclesiastical polity, of spiritual independence with the close union of Church and State.

No scene in the history of this period is more touching than that which a famous picture has made familiar—the emaciated and dying Reformer, surrounded by the saddened senators of Geneva, stemming for a brief space with iron will, amid acute bodily pain, the fast-ebbing tide of his strength, in order humbly to acknowledge his personal failings, but at the same time to reaffirm his doctrine, with all the emphasis of a farewell testimony, as the very truth of God. Reserved and apparently cold in disposition, compared with the genial and emotional Luther—the one an impersonation of the snowy grandeur of Mont Blanc, the other of the mighty current of the Rhine—Calvin lacked Luther's power of moving directly a vast nation; but he not only moved, he moulded the influential few who came within the spell of his impressive personality. He moulded the magis-

trates of Geneva so as to make its government a virtual theocracy. He imbued with his spirit the representatives of many lands, so as to constitute the Genevan Church a legislatress for Reformed Christendom.<sup>1</sup>

By the time of Calvin's death the boundaries of Protestant<sup>2</sup> and Roman Catholic Christendom were, for the most part, virtually determined; although in several countries the issue was still uncertain, and the conflict ceased only with the close of the Thirty Years' War in 1648.

**I. REFORMED CHRISTENDOM—1. LUTHERAN CHURCHES**  
—(1) In the German Empire, Charles V. desired to crush Lutheranism and re-establish religious uniformity; fortunately for the Protestant cause, he was still more anxious to defend and extend his vast dominions. He was not only Emperor of Germany but, as the result of successive marriage alliances, sovereign of Spain and Portugal, of Austria and most of Italy, of Burgundy and the Netherlands. The dream of his life was to revive the universal empire of Charlemagne. This ambition involved him in wars with France, and also provoked the hostility of popes who valued temporal supremacy in Italy equally with spiritual supremacy over Christendom; while the Turks repeatedly encroached on Hungary and menaced Vienna. Amid such imperial distractions the German States became virtually free to determine their ecclesiastical attitude.<sup>3</sup> Speaking generally, the Northern half of Germany (led by Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, and by successive Electors of Saxony), along with Wür-

<sup>1</sup> Renan—no partial witness—eulogising the sublime devotion with which Calvin “sacrificed all to the desire of making others like himself,” ascribes the success of “one apparently so unsympathetic” to the “simple fact that he was the most Christian man of his age.”

<sup>2</sup> The name Protestant was first applied to German Lutherans who protested at the Diet of Spires in 1529 against the repeal of reforming edicts passed at the Diet of 1526.

<sup>3</sup> At the Diet of Spires in 1526 it was decreed that as regards

temberg and the Palatinate, adhered to Protestantism ; the last named, however, eventually adopted a moderately Calvinistic creed. The Lutheran Faith was expounded in the Augsburg Confession, drawn up by Melanchthon, under Luther's guidance, in 1530. Its clear expositions of reformed doctrine were largely reproduced in later creeds, although its obscure dogma of Consubstantiation (the corporeal presence of Christ "in, with, and under" the Communion elements) prevented the Confession from being accepted outside the Lutheran Churches. Hymns sung by the people were introduced into the ritual ; liturgical worship, instrumental music, Christian festivals, and pictures (as aids to devotion) were retained. The old episcopate was replaced by the office of superintendent, along with a court called the Consistory, composed of clergy and laymen. (2) Outside of Germany, Lutheranism became the national religion in Scandinavia only. In Denmark, with which Norway was politically united, the Reformation, introduced in 1520, was consummated in 1536 under Christian III., whose admiration for Luther had been first kindled at the Diet of Worms. The establishment of Lutheranism in Sweden followed, a few years later, under Gustavus Vasa, grandfather of Gustavus Adolphus.

**2. Calvinistic Churches.**—Calvinism not only extended itself over all the Swiss Cantons which embraced the Reformation, but was substantially adopted by the Reformed Churches of France, Holland, and Scotland. (1) France gave to Geneva the founder and also the organiser of its Church ; Geneva repaid the debt when religion "each state should live, govern, and behave itself as it should answer to God and to the Emperor" ; and although, at intervals when Charles had rest from external war, attempts were made to reverse this decree, it was substantially reaffirmed at the Augsburg Diet in 1555. The decision, however, as to what should be the national religion was left not to the people but to the ruler ("cujus regio ejus religio").

it trained numerous French refugees to become successful Huguenot<sup>1</sup> missionaries and pastors in their native land. Five years before Calvin's death a French Reformed Church, in full sympathy with his own, was formally constituted; by that time, in spite of persecution, there were about 2000 Protestant meeting-places in the kingdom. The reformed ranks contained not a few of the nobility, including Coligny, and some members of the royal family, notably the Prince of Condé and Henry of Navarre (afterwards Henry IV.). This was at once a strength and a weakness. It gave to the Huguenots political power, and at the close of the century led to their enjoyment of complete toleration. But it also entailed political, in addition to religious, hostility, and associated the name of Huguenot with civil war as well as religious reform. Between 1563 and 1567 there was partial toleration, but five years later took place the massacre of St. Bartholomew, in which 20,000 Protestants perished. The accession of Henry IV. in 1589 excited Huguenot hopes of Protestantism being established as the national faith—hopes speedily dissipated by his reluctant apostasy to Rome as the price of national tranquillity. The Edict of Nantes (1598), however,—the Charter of ecclesiastical toleration—would, if conserved, have secured for France a strong and loyal, although nonconformist, Reformed Church. The Revocation of the Edict in 1685, when half a million industrious citizens were driven into exile, was hardly less severe a blow to the persecuting State than to the persecuted Church. (2) Holland.—Prior to the abdication of Charles V. in 1556, the Reformation had made great progress, in spite of repression, among a people

<sup>1</sup> The term Huguenots, originally applied as a nickname, is usually taken to be a corruption of Eidgenossen (Confederates)—the name given at one time to the half-political, half-religious Swiss confederacy against the Duke of Savoy.

whose love of civil liberty fostered their desire for religious emancipation ; and between 1559 and 1563 a creed and Church polity, based on those of Geneva, had been adopted. At the time of Calvin's death, Philip II., the son of Charles, was pursuing in the Netherlands that insane policy of civil oppression combined with religious persecution which caused Protestantism to be identified with patriotism, and which issued in the contemporaneous rise of the Dutch Republic and adoption of Calvinism as the national faith. (3) **Scotland.**—The long struggle against Rome which began with the testimony of Patrick Hamilton, and culminated in the martyrdom of Wishart and the ministry of Knox, virtually closed in 1560 with the establishment of a Reformed Church, on Calvinistic lines, by the Scottish Estates. The return, indeed, of Queen Mary from France in 1561 inspired many with sanguine hopes of the restoration of Romanism ; but national conviction, the zeal and power of Knox, the statesmanship of the Earl of Murray, and the landowners' greed of Church property, were forces too strong even for queenly beauty, address, and Catholic devotion to overcome. After a few years, when passion in Mary superseded policy, her power, and with it Romanist hopes, collapsed. The abdication at Lochleven (1567) and the rout of Langside (1568) sealed the fate alike of the Queen and of her Church.

**3. Anglican Church.**—In 1534, Henry VIII., irritated by the Pope's refusal or delay to divorce him from Queen Catherine, severed the Church from Rome without any considerable reformation of doctrine. He put to death, impartially, Protestants like Frith and Romanists like Fisher. In Edward VI.'s brief reign (1547-1553) a genuinely reformed Church of England was established under Cranmer's guidance ; but the revolt from Rome, selfishly inaugurated by Henry, had as yet excited no

popular enthusiasm. The hot persecution of Protestants under "Bloody Mary" (1553-1558) and the dark suspicion that Romish restoration was a prelude to Spanish domination, were needed to pave the way for the cordial acceptance of Protestantism under Elizabeth. The Anglican Church, while owing much of its creed to Luther and Calvin, retained episcopal government and as much of the Roman ritual as was consistent with Reformed doctrine.

4. **Bohemia, Poland, and Hungary** had, in 1564, large Protestant populations. In Bohemia the Husites had welcomed the Reformation, and at this stage, in spite of persecution, the strength of Protestantism gave promise of its eventual triumph. In Poland, Bohemian refugees had advanced the Protestant cause, and religious toleration had been recently established. In Hungary, down to the close of the sixteenth century, Protestantism gained ground. But in all three countries the contentions of Lutherans, Calvinists, and (in Bohemia and Poland) Husites who kept aloof from both—contentions aggravated by jealousy between German and Slavonic or Hungarian populations—opened the door for proselytism by the Jesuits, and afforded a pretext for repression by the State. In Poland the Reformation was also discredited by the Unitarian movement of Socinus in 1551. By the middle of the seventeenth century the Protestant Church in Hungary was reduced to insignificance; in Bohemia and Poland it was almost extinct.

II. **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHRISTENDOM.**—1. At the time of Calvin's death, nearly all the Southern half of Europe adhered to Rome. In Italy a Protestant movement had been arrested by papal persecution; only the Waldenses held aloft the evangelical standard. In Spain the Reformation had been stamped out by the merciless policy of

**Philip II. and the Inquisition.** In Bavaria and Austria Lutheranism had been effectually repressed by Roman Catholic potentates and Jesuit emissaries. The German Rhineland, where the Reformation had made considerable progress, was protected from Protestant ascendancy by the Diet of Augsburg (1555), which decreed the deposition of the ecclesiastical princes of Cologne, Treves, and Mayence in the event of their secession from Rome. The Irish, in spite of an Anglican Protestant Establishment, remained loyal to Romanism. Two-fifths of Switzerland preferred Rome to Geneva. In the "debatable lands" where in 1564 the religious conflict was in progress—France, the southern Netherlands, Bohemia, Poland, Hungary—Rome was destined to secure the victory. Spanish and Portuguese conquerors and missionaries had already diffused Romanism in Mexico and part of South America, while Protestant colonisation in the New World had hardly begun.

**2. Roman Reformation.**—The retention or recovery of so large a portion of Christendom by Rome was not wholly due to secular despotism, religious persecution, and Jesuit intrigue. The religious revival, theological awakening, and opposition to ecclesiastical abuse which caused the Reformation, exerted a wholesome influence on the old Church, and Protestant success stimulated Romish effort. This "counter-Reformation" chiefly manifested itself in (1) *Revision of doctrine.* So early as 1523 a society of evangelical Catholics, the "Oratory of Divine Love," including several future cardinals and one future pope (Paul IV.), expounded the doctrine of Justification by Faith in terms not widely divergent from those of the Reformers; and at a colloquy in 1541, held at Ratisbon, representatives of the society and moderate Protestants led by Melanchthon were able to adopt a common formula on this and several other disputed

doctrines. The chief literary production of the Oratory, however, was censured by the Inquisition. At the Roman Catholic Council of Trent (1548-1564), while the sole supremacy of Scripture was disowned, and the dogmas specially opposed by the Reformers were reaffirmed, care was taken to guard disputed doctrines (e.g. those regarding penance, indulgence, and image-worship) from prevalent misconception. (2) **Reformation of discipline.** During the period of conflict the popes were men of respectable character; most were in favour of practical reforms; some were men of earnest piety. The Council of Trent dealt effectively with clerical incontinence and non-residence; the chief religious orders underwent extensive purgation; the parochial clergy were supervised with increased efficiency; and some bishops, as Borromeo of Milan, notably united a pure life with strict discipline and home-mission zeal. Thus one ground of Protestant denunciation was in part removed. (3) **Educational zeal** was conspicuously exemplified by the Jesuit Society (founded by Ignatius Loyola in 1540), whose proselytising eagerness was often combined with genuine devotion. Its schools and colleges rapidly multiplied, and not only promoted intellectual culture, but increased the reputation of the Roman Church, and brought the youth of all lands within its influence. (4) **Missionary enterprise.** When the Reformation began, Las Casas, a Dominican of Seville, was in the meridian of a missionary career in the West Indies. In 1526 twelve Franciscans founded a native Mexican Church. Seven students who formed the nucleus of the Jesuit Order dedicated themselves originally to the conversion of Moslems in Palestine; and although the outbreak of war between Turks and Christians diverted the Society's aims to the revival of religion and of Romanism at home, missionary aspirations were not forgotten. In

1549 Nobreya commenced to evangelise Brazil. A few years earlier, Francis Xavier of Navarre, one of the original seven, had landed at Goa in India, and begun his great missionary career. The south of Hindostan, the Indian Archipelago, and Japan became in turn the scenes of his devoted and successful labours. In 1551 he was cut off by fever in China before he had commenced there what he hoped would be the great work of his life.

It is not absolutely true that the Protestant Church of the sixteenth century undertook no missionary work. In 1556 a company of Huguenots and fourteen Genevan evangelists inaugurated in Brazil a missionary enterprise which became abortive only through the perfidy of its promoter; and the Virginia colony in North America, organised soon after 1580, had missionary as well as secular aims, and recorded in 1587 its first native baptism. But not until long after the Reformation did the Protestant Churches awake to a sense of missionary responsibility. For this grave shortcoming something may be pleaded in extenuation. Often the whole energy of the Church was occupied with the struggle for existence; and the promotion of maritime and colonial enterprise at that epoch mainly by Roman Catholic nations led to the spiritual needs of heathendom, along with the missionary duty of Christendom, coming more directly under Romish than under Protestant notice. Nevertheless, this missionary neglect of the Reformed Church is a blot upon her early history and helped to arrest her progress. Protestantism would have maintained a higher spiritual tone in its membership, would have attached to itself a larger portion of the earnest piety of Christendom, and might have been saved from those internal conflicts which weakened its testimony and strengthened the Roman reaction, had the early Reformed Church devoted a fair

proportion of her sympathy and energy to the work of "preaching the gospel to every creature," instead of leaving the duty to a less evangelical but in that period more evangelistic Communion. In later times the missionary character of Reformed Christendom has been amply redeemed. The century now closing has witnessed a signal quickening of the missionary spirit, and the gradual extension of Protestant missionary enterprise over every province of heathendom. Now more widely, perhaps, than in any age since Apostolic times, although still imperfectly, it is recognised by the members of the Christian Church that support of missions is not an optional practice but a necessary duty. In what is also an age of widespread scepticism and religious apathy, no better means will be found of strengthening faith and kindling devotion than an increased anxiety in the Church's genuine membership to fulfil the "marching orders" (Matt. xxviii. 19) of her Risen Lord.

## APPENDIX

### LANDMARKS OF CHURCH HISTORY SUBSEQUENT TO THE DEATH OF CALVIN IN 1564

1588

Defeat and destruction of the Spanish Armada—Virtual close of organised efforts by Roman Catholic potentates to annihilate Protestantism (including the massacre of Huguenots in 1572).

1597

Edict of Nantes—Concession of civil rights and religious liberty, within prescribed territories, to the Protestants of France—Inauguration of the exercise of religious toleration.

1618-19

Synod of Dort, in Holland, attended by representatives of various Reformed Churches—Condemnation of Arminian doctrine and culmination of internal conflict in Reformed Christendom between Calvinism and Arminianism.

1620

Arrival of the “Pilgrim Fathers” in the *Mayflower* at Plymouth in Massachusetts—Foundation of Reformed Church of North America on Puritan lines.

1643

Assembly of Divines at Westminster by appointment of the English Parliament—Temporary triumph of the Solemn League and Covenant in Great Britain—more permanent settlement of Doctrine, Worship, and Church Government for English-speaking Presbyterians throughout the world.

1648

Peace of Westphalia—Termination of the Thirty Years' politico-religious war in Germany—Practical delimitation of Roman and Reformed European Christendom.

1675

Inauguration of Pietism in Germany with the publication of Spener's *Pia Desideria*—Widespread reaction in Protestant Christendom from an over-estimate of Confessional orthodoxy and ecclesiastical organisation, in favour of Biblical theology and experimental religion.

1685

Revocation of the Edict of Nantes—Renewed persecution of Huguenots and arrested development of the French Reformed Church—Simultaneous expulsion of Waldenses and culmination of the persecution of Scottish Covenanters.

1689

British Revolution—Close of the conflict in Britain, and testimony, before Europe and America, against ecclesiastical as well as political despotism—Permanent re-establishment of Presbyterianism in

Scotland as the religion of the majority of the people—Toleration Act in England securing liberty of worship for Protestant Non-conformists.

1713

Termination of a Seventy Years' struggle between Jansenists and Jesuits by the Papal condemnation of the former—Virtual repudiation of Augustinian Theology by the Roman Church and breaking of a remanent link between Romanism and Protestantism.

1732

Inauguration at Herrnhut of Moravian Missions (in West and East Indies, Greenland, Labrador and Caffreland) five years after the constitution of the Moravian Brotherhood under Count Zinzendorf; chief prelude to the general missionary revival in Reformed Christendom. Nearly simultaneous commencement of Jewish missionary enterprise at Halle (1728).

1736, 1751

Two Landmarks in the history of the conflict of Christianity with the opponents of Supernatural Religion: (1) Butler's *Analogy* (published in 1736), which demonstrates, against the Deists, that essentially the same difficulties belong to Natural as to Revealed Religion; (2) the Foundation by Semler (Professor at Halle from 1751) of the German Rationalistic School of Divines, whose aim was to disarm opposition to Christianity by minimising its supernatural element.

1739

Commencement of Religious Revival in England under John Wesley and George Whitefield—Origination of

**Methodism by Wesley, under Moravian influence—Simultaneous Revival in America, stimulated by visits of Whitefield.** Up till 1784 Methodists were a Society within the Church of England ; from that date, when Wesley ordained Superintendents and other ministers, the Society became a separately organised Church.

1773

**Abolition of the Order of Jesuits by Pope Clement XIV., after its suppression in France, Spain, and Portugal—Significant concession by Romanism to the Illumination Movement (Reason against Faith) in the eighteenth century, corresponding with the rationalistic concessions of German Protestantism.**

1783

**Close of the American War of Independence—Independent organisation and development of American Churches—Inauguration of modern Religious Voluntaryism—Dissociation of Churches in the United States from State connection—Foundation of American Episcopate by consecration of Bishop Seabury at Aberdeen in 1784—First Methodist Conference in America at Baltimore in same year—Institution of American Presbyterian General Assembly in 1788.**

1793

**(1) Nov. 10 : Culmination of anti-Christian tendency in the French Revolution of 1789—Enthronement on that day of the Goddess of Reason (personified by a profligate woman) in the Cathedral of Notre Dame—Formal abjuration of Christianity by Archbishop of Paris and other clergy—Abolition of Lord's Day and suppression of public Christian Worship.**

- (2) Nov. 11: Arrival of Carey in Calcutta, and inauguration of the modern era of Foreign Mission enterprise—Foundation of various Missionary Societies (Baptist Society, 1792; London Missionary, 1795; two Scottish Societies, 1796; Church Missionary, 1799).

1810

Schleiermacher becomes Professor in the newly-founded University of Berlin—Commencement under his influence of the reaction (continued and developed by his disciple Neander) from pure Rationalism in Continental Christendom—Rise of Romanticism.

1814

Restoration of temporal power to the Papacy after Napoleon's overthrow—Re-establishment of the Jesuit Order—Commencement of recovery by Church of Rome from loss of prestige and power caused by the Illumination Movement and the Revolution.

1820-50

Varied religious activity in Reformed Christendom:—

1. Evangelical Revival in Europe: in Germany under Harms (from 1817) and Tholuck (from 1826); in France under the Monods (from 1830); in Switzerland under Malan and D'Aubigné (1830); in Scotland under Chalmers (from 1815).
2. Anglo-Catholic Revival in England under Newman, Keble, and Pusey (from 1827)—Rise of the rival Broad Church Party under Arnold, Maurice, and others.
3. (1) Alliance of Christian Theology with Hegelian Philosophy. (2) Foundation by Baur of the Tübingen School of historical criticism applied to

the New Testament and early Christian Literature (1842).

4. Ecclesiastical consolidation and disintegration—Completed union of Lutherans and Calvinists in Prussia (1822) and other German States—Formation at London of Evangelical Alliance, for the presentation of a united front against infidelity and superstition (1846)—Severance of American Presbyterianism into Old School and New School Churches (1838)—Disruption in the Church of Scotland (1843).
5. Controversy in American Churches regarding the lawfulness of slavery (especially after its abolition throughout British Empire in 1833), preparatory to later emancipation (1863).

### 1870

1. Exaltation and Humiliation of the Papacy: on 18th July Papal Infallibility decreed by the Vatican Council, involving the triumph of reactionary against liberal Romanism; on 19th July, war declared by France against Prussia, issuing (after evacuation of Rome by the French) in the abolition of Papal temporal power, and the toleration in Rome of Protestant worship.
2. Simultaneous movement outside the Church of Rome towards ecclesiastical union, and for federation against infidelity and irreligion. Pan-Anglican Synods (1867 and 1878); Congress of Greek, Old Catholic, and Anglican Churches at Bonn (1874); formation of Pan-Presbyterian Alliance (1875); Presbyterian Re-union in America (1878).
3. Growing conflict of the Church against Anti-theism (especially Materialism and Agnosticism) as distinguished from earlier conflict against Deism.

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